UNIVERSITAT DE VALÈNCIA

Facultat de Filologia

Departament de Filologia Anglesa i Alemanya

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING:
AN APPLIED READING EXPERIMENT IN USA

TESIS DOCTORAL

Autor:

Efrén Obeso Izquierdo

Directora:

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To my friends and family

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS THESIS

ASTP: Army Specialized Training Program

ASV: American School of Valencia

AEWS: Academic Early Warning Status

AWS: Academic Warning Status

AYP: Adequate Yearly Progress

BASIC: British American Scientific International Commercial

BOCAIB: Boletín Oficial de las Islas Baleares

CALL: Computer Assisted Language Learning

CATS: Civil Affairs Training Schools

CLIL: Content Language Integrated Learning

CRTVG: Compañía de Radio/Televisión de Galicia

ELL: English Language Learner

ESL: English as a Second Language

ETB: Euskal Telebista

FAST: Family And School Together

FL: Foreign Language

GB: Gigabyte

GHZ: Gigahertz

GPA: Grade Point Average

IB: International Baccalaureate

IQ: Intelligence Quotient

ISAT: Illinois Standard Achievement Test

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

IT: Information Technology

K-12: Kindergarten through twelfth grade

LAD: Language Acquisition Device

LEP: Limited English Proficiency

LUEV: Llei d´Ús i Ensenyament del Valencià

MALL: Mobile Assisted Language Learning

MMS: Multimedia Messaging Service

NCLB: No Child Left Behind

NLP: Neuro-Linguistic Program

OBEMLA: Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs

PAU: Prueba Acceso Universidad

PC: Personal Computer

PDA: Personal Digital Assistant

PDF: Portable Document Format

PE: Physical Education

PEV: Programa d´Ensenyament en Valencià

PIL: Programa d´Immersió Lingüística

PIP: Programa d´Incorporació Progressiva

PLATO: Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations

PTO: Parent Teachers Organization

RPS: Rockford Public Schools

SAT: Standard Achievement Test

SEDEC: Servei d´Ensenyament del Català

SMS: Short Messaging Service

TBL: Task Based Learning

TGG: Transformational Generative Grammar

TICCIT: Time-shared Interactive Computer Controlled Information Television

TPR: Total Physical Response

TVG: Televisión de Galicia

VR: Virtual Reality

1. INTRODUCTION

> On the threshold of the amazing growth science and technology from our most recent past are experiencing, certain areas of human activity have undergone a humongous change. Telecommunication, leisure, transportation and medicine are among these areas, being the school an outstanding exception (Papert, 1993: 16)

1.1 Introduction to early second language teaching in Spain

This dissertation focuses on the idea of an updated, technologically enhanced second language education being implemented at the early stages of the Spanish education, aiming at technological inclusion when instructing in order to refresh the language teaching context.

Spain not being immediately surrounded by countries having English as one of their official languages, does not help Spaniards visualize how important it would be for the community to relentlessly work on the ability of communicating using English as a second language. Distance between Spain and the closest English speaking nation, added to the global relevance of the languages used in the European Community other than English, builds up a feeling of idiomatic insularity containing the international projection of the members of the community, closing doors to the outer world in terms of communication.

The importance of the usage of English language outside Anglophone countries being a fact should be always kept in mind when outlining educational curricula, so that the objectives in the Language and Arts spectrum are correctly set to be applied at the early stages of language learning.

Take the statements of Richards (1978: 5) "more people speak and use English in their daily lives as a second language in countries like Jamaica, Nigeria, India, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Fiji, to name but a few instances, than speak English as a mother tongue or native language in countries like England, Canada, the United States, Australia, or New Zealand", and Willis (1990: 14) "the world´s need for a common language will quite certainly be augmented beyond measure in the very near future" on that matter.

Including the study of English as a second language late in the curriculum does not benefit the students, despite all the fears faced by parents about early English as a second language instruction, delaying its implementation only hardens and deteriorates the acquiring process.

This is due to speech not happening to be lateralized in the brains of young kids whereas in the brains of teenagers, second languages being acquired find themselves placed preferably in their right hemispheres, as explained by Lopez (1991: 19).

Thus, there are no academic reasons to postpone multilingual acquisition since it has been proven that the earliest a student dives into the deep waters of language learning, the better outcome awaits.

> Research shows that learners who start when they are children achieve a more native-like accent than those who start as adolescents or adults.
>
> Clavel-Arroaitia (2012: 41)

This line of thought responds to the natural ability children have to acquire new contents in general, and new languages in particular, as opposed to the difficulties faced by adults when committing to late initiation to any type of learning.

Bialystok (1991: 34) believes in that natural ability children have, and rejects fearing an acquisition delay as a result of aiming at bilingualism "bilinguals can attain the facility to function in two different languages simultaneously, without taking twice as long than a monolingual needs to acquire one".

1.2 Introduction to IT applied language teaching

Technology provides teachers with new tools to upgrade their teaching approaches, enrich their methodologies and address students according to their specific needs in an integrative way. Students find technology related items engaging and fun, including education, making IT look ideal as an educational complement nowadays.

The adaptability software brings to the table makes it possible for both teachers and students to find tailored channels to teach and learn for almost every individual instead of the old school rigid methodologies that were to be adapted to by teachers and students, lacking any sort of flexibility.

> Individual language learners have different learning needs, styles and interests. Individual language teachers have different skills, styles, and interests.
>
> Richards (1978: 251)

Tablets are being underutilized by educators, because while their capabilities are multiplying their costs are being reduced, and so is their weight and size, making them the ultimate gadget to channel technologic advances having an impact on education.

From September 2011, Webb School in Knoxville has been demanding mandatory use of iPads both to primary and secondary students, offering three-years lease programs under the supervision Jim Manikas.

More of a virtual learning is being implemented by the renowned Kahn Academy, which has gone from the idea of remote mentoring come up with by Salman Kahn, a former hedge fund analyst, to being endorsed by Bill Gates and gone global

Hameyer (1989: 129) believes that although microcomputers have reached schools, they have had little impact on many areas of the curriculum.

Desktop computers reduce the engaging effect technology has on children by having to be shared or used for short periods of time, plus it lacks portability making it less appealing than microcomputers.

Tablets are ready to tag along children because of their maneuverability, fitting in their backpacks and feeling naturally comfortable in their hands, exploiting the technologic engaging effect by avoiding physical barriers. Students are not forced to take turns on the usage of tablets since they all can have one assigned to them, because of the affordability of the new hardware, making it feel more personal and fulfilling the will of the student by doing so.

The aforementioned engaging effect brought by technology is considered a key factor by Obrist (1985: 14), who states that teachers have the unique opportunity of utilizing the enthusiasm children feel towards microcomputers as a real learning help.

Spain is delaying the implementation of IT related education when compared to other nations, which could mean being left behind in terms of academic achievement. Teachers have already spoken up in relation to the matter, feeling that it could benefit instruction in general and language learning in particular, because of the special nature of it.

In Spain, the Ministry of Education implements the Escuela 2.0 program, which promotes the usage of netbooks featuring at least 10" screens, 60 Gb hard drives, 1 GHz processors and both wired and wireless Internet capabilities, allowing usage of open source software on them. Escuela 2.0 is providing public Spanish schools with an average of 300,000 netbooks each year.

Some Spanish public schools are just starting to utilize tablets, but the Industrial Organization School of Madrid is using tablets from 2009, including them as part of the mandatory entrance fees of enrollment.

According to Domínguez (2006: 17) the implementation of new technologies when it comes to teaching languages should already be a reality.

The ratio used to measure the amount of computers made available for students thirty years ago has nothing to do with the very same ratio twenty years ago, and it has nothing to do with the numbers defining the present or the upcoming situation.

As published by the U.S. Office of Technology Assessment (1995: 148) "in 1981 there were, on average, 125 students per computer in the United States. In 1991, there were 18 students per computer", so it is safe to state that the school use of computers has spread deeply.

1.3 Introductory notes to the present study

Reading is the scaffold other skills are based upon, since reading comprehension plays a key role in any subject faced by students, being it language related or not.

In Spain, reading is even harder to learn than in other parts of the world in some situations, because of Spanish being a phonetic language as opposed to other second languages taught in the country, predominantly English. Learning to read at the same time in two languages, being only one of them phonetic, poses an additional difficulty for both teachers and students.

Students feel confused because they fail when transferring phonetic reading techniques from Spanish to English, and teachers are to apply different reading techniques depending on the language being addressed.

> Of all the skills that the child must acquire in school, reading is the most complex and difficult.
>
> Goldman (1987: 59)

Although it is true that students face a real challenge when learning to read in a second language due to the experimental transferring of rules from one language to the other, it becomes totally beneficial once the initial struggles are overcome. At first, bilingual students who are learning how to read in two languages experience difficulties due to them possibly lacking familiarity with the semantic and syntactic constraints of the target languages, as noted by Goldman (1987: 59).

At certain early ages, mind takes over matter in an incredibly easy way, perfectly separating the learning and usage of different languages almost automatically. It is critical to be constant when teaching children, without undermining their rapid processing and hypothesis making.

Many different situations legitimize computing to be used in education in general and in language teaching in particular, since it helps solve riddles that are currently appearing in Spain and its education, such as higher student teacher ratios and its consequent shortage of certified educators because of surplus.

Computerized teaching aids not only amplify the message transmitted by teachers, but also enable teachers to monitor different groups of students at the same time. Take Hameyer (1989: 39) "computers should be used as teaching aids when this would enhance teaching and contribute to the solution of different teaching problems".

Eclectic approaches have been used in language teaching for a long time now, and they are in their prime, representing the edge of instruction because of their adaptability to the changing demands of society, and their versatility when addressing the specific needs of individual students, empowering educators to maximize the quality of their performance. Even though eclectic approaches do not derive from technology usage, their most important factor is their adaptability, making their usage seem feasible to implement technology assisted language learning until specific approaches arise.

One of the factors slowing down the process of technological adaptation in schooling in Spain has been the necessity of an updated methodology backing it up, but that should not be considered acceptable since methodologies have been reinventing themselves through time over and over again, prioritizing the specific needs students have encountered or easing the introduction of new concepts that proved to be worthy of not being let aside.

According to Domínguez (2006: 53) methodologies should adapt to the teaching needs and possibilities, not the other way round since the methodology is conditioned and justified by the means.

Members of the community of educators have also expressed their fear, stigmatizing computers as intrusive items aiming at replacing the teacher as the main source of education. Computers are to be considered educating aids for the teachers to use, a complement to go along human instruction, having teachers as facilitators and managers at all times.

At no time are computers being proposed as substitutive but rather as implementing tools, which represent an extension of the very same teachers computers are useless without, so human educators not only come first but they are essential.

Even though the communicative approach brought the usage of authentic material when teaching languages, revolutionizing instruction at that point, nothing is accepted to be as effective as immersion in a community of speakers to acquire the target language.

Nowadays, it is economically difficult for students to experience immersion exiting Spain, but technology is about to accomplish an artificial emulation of the situation without the expenses of the natural one, bringing the communities to the learner instead of being the learner who is to leave it all behind to immerse.

Computers have modified their portability, capability and affordability whereas books have not undergone any significant modification, outdating themselves in the process. Recently, electronic books have risen to the surface, impacting the traditional format of books, making them more portable, more capable and more affordable, following suit with computers. Tablets are being developed software-wise so that, among many other educational installable applications, they can be used as electronic books, well-rounding their potential to the eyes of educators.

Even though present computers are nothing like what computers were twenty years ago, books have not undergone the same process of renewal until now, when along with the print format, a digital version is rapidly growing, offering teachers new advantages and options. One of these advantages is the size of digital books, because while the average middle school student

in the United States carries more than twenty pounds in a book bag, doctors suggest that in order to avoid physical injury people should never carry more than ten percent of their body weight.

> Hardware devices supporting electronic books weight as little as a pound, and a gigabyte of memory could contain more than two hundred illustrated college reference books in PDF format, representing not only a cost-effective but also health-conscious alternative.
>
> Cavanaugh (2006: 2)

Implementing the usage of new technologies for instructional purposes could be even cheaper than instructing without them, because new technologies give access to schools and students to free downloadable materials hosted in servers that schools would pay for otherwise.

Instructional reading material being offered to download at no cost has been progressively adding up, reaching a considerable amount by now, since Cavanaugh points out that "up to twenty-seven percent of the suggested K-12 reading material for language arts in the state of Florida could be obtained at no cost to students, teachers or schools with Internet access, topping up to seventy percent of the required reading for 11th grade".

Experiencing while learning has been proven to ease the process, by making contents stick in the long term memory of the student because of the usage of multiple senses and the enhanced acquisition that accompanies pleasuring learning environments. In that sense, Burguer (1996: 41) adds that "active participation leads to understanding the topic".

Manpower and institutional structuring are in need of renewal, falling into the obsolete category by not keeping pace with the constant evolution around them. Updating the system is a

must since new questions are arising and the answers used in return are not valid any more. New needs have already arrived to the life of the students, and educators must fill in the gap to provide them with the right coverage.

The lack of opportunity to develop an understanding of the potential presented by the innovation, and the lack of teacher experience with new technologies, exploring, experimenting, and learning how these tools can enrich the learning experience, represent a delay in the impact between the arrival of new technology and the implementation literacy needed to make the technology useful for teaching and learning.

The source of the outdated situation finds its epicenter not in the amount of contents instructed but in the way contents are instructed, because new channels validate paths that were not to be followed in the past, but now they represent an improved way to implement contents within the schools.

> Increasing the information to which students are subjected does not necessarily ensure an increase in their knowledge. In fact some scholars have observed that as information doubles, knowledge halves and wisdom quarters because of a lack of deep processing level of learning.
>
> Carbonara (2005: 57)

Even though IT applied education seems relatively new, high productivity has been a really old object of desire for the teaching community. Now, according to Carbonara (2005: 151), that goal looks reasonably reachable because of the arrival of the usage of new technologies in education, since effectiveness benefits from a maximizing effect due to the effects of a supplemented teaching power.

The readiness and preparedness of teachers are vital for the success of the implementation of new technologies in education. Teachers are to be trained for the sake of the updating process because without them being capable of taking that leap, insufficient capabilities mean total failure of the process.

> By the late 1990s, the United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics surveyed teachers feelings of preparedness in many areas, including integrating educational technology into the grade or subject area they taught, reporting that only twenty percent of teachers felt very well prepared to integrate technology in their classroom, and only thirty-three percent of those teachers who had trained for more than eight hours of training in integrating technology into their own content areas reported that they felt very well prepared to use technology.
>
> Cumming (1999: 450)

Specific software accompanying a potential change of methodology is still underdeveloped or it is unaffordable for consumers, representing a barrier to be worked on. Economic software worthy of channeling the effort of teachers and the possibilities of renewed hardware is the next step to be taken, since building without properly scaffolding could diminish the feasibility of it all. This idea links with what was published by the U.S. Office of Technology Assessment (1986: 55) "the provision of high-quality, reasonably priced educational software is the principal technological challenge, since low-cost hardware will be widely available to most homes, offices and schools".

Taking all the aforementioned considerations into account, the objectives this dissertation aims at are varied, but nonetheless, related to each other creating a holistic unitary idea.

Objective 1: to prove the validity of importing guided reading techniques utilized in American bilingual schools to be implemented in Spain in order to achieve proper second language teaching at early stages of schooling.

Objective 2: to highlight some of the language teaching possibilities that IT implemented instruction in general, and IT implemented guided reading instruction in particular could offer to language teaching.

Objective 3: to consider the possibility of a renewed methodology that could cover the necessary scaffolding function in order to enable IT implemented guided reading second language teaching techniques being implemented in Spanish schools in the near future.

1.4 Sequencing

The state of the art chapter is dedicated to reviewing previous studies on the matter being researched here. Different aspects such as the origins of reading, including the etymological standpoint, as well as both present, traditional and potentially future aims of teaching reading are also dealt with in this chapter, along with the evaluation of recent developments on the topic, and the possibility of it being utilized in cross-cultural studies.

The theoretical and analytical framework chapter includes the objectives of this research, as well as the explanation of the steps taken in its elaboration process, including the gathered data.

The methodology chapter unveils the study description, the development of the research statement, and the collection and analysis of data, including a description of its sources and the methods taken to its successful collection.

In the chapter titled the context of the study, the environment surrounding the data collection is explained, including details related to my experience as a bilingual teacher in the USA such as the selection of site and participants. A depiction of the school where data was collected from, its students and teachers, can be found here.

The legal framework chapter includes relevant information on how the situation of law has deeply affected the development of language teaching, and on how it could adequate and scaffold its future.

The IT applied language learning situation chapter refers to how much of a factor have the new technologies had in the education field up until now, overviews its development, and prospects for an improved application in the future.

The language learning methodologies chapter reviews the main language teaching approaches that have been utilized, trying to evaluate them in terms of adaptability to the demands of the present situation. New demands or possibilities have traditionally been accompanied by new methodologies for them to be met, and it is under such paradigm that the chapter questions the validity of already existing methodologies in order to escort the rapid development of computing and the capabilities it offers to education.

The guided reading chapter focuses on describing this reading instruction methodology being utilized in the USA, hypothesizing about the feasibility of it being imported to Spanish

schools to empower the teaching of English as a second language at the earliest stages of education.

The bilingualism chapter reviews the wide variety of bilingual programs existing nowadays, and how they differ from each other in terms of purposes. Considering real bilingual instruction in Spain, it is necessary to look back at systems where it is not only a reality but, in some cases, a tradition. By doing it, the option fitting best our demands can be analyzed and, if considered valid, imitated and used as a base for our own system.

The integrative IT ESL method chapter theorizes about the necessity of a new teaching approach being created to properly accommodate the arrival and real usage of new technologies regarding language teaching.

The analysis and results chapter examines the progress that American students experienced in their reading under a guided reading techniques based instruction, because it is proposed here as a beneficial language teaching approach to be profited from in the upcoming Spanish early schooling second language teaching.

The conclusion chapter tries to evaluate the completion of the objectives ambitioned along this research, as well as summarize the strongest evidences found or proposals made based upon the evaluation of the analyzed data and the information collected in each chapter.

The references chapter lists the publications this research is based upon, being some of them printed books that the library of the University of Valencia presented me with, and others

are online versions of books that were not available in Spain, along with specialized magazines and newspapers reports.

The appendix chapter includes information from the data corpus analyzed in this research, as well as some information that chapters mention and refer to but do not include, being an example of it the extract of the interviews made to both Paul Yankee and Julianne Stall.

2. STATE OF THE ART: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

2.1 Review of studies

There are numerous recent studies on international IT implemented teaching nowadays, which focus on different aspects of this subject such as the role of teachers and administrators, the adequacy of the skills, the working habits or the generation gap existing between teachers and students, to name just a few.

A.K. Jager and A.H. Lokman, in a study presented at the European Conference on Educational Research held in Finland back in 1999, studies ICT implemented teaching in The Netherlands, giving special importance to the role of teachers. This study rejects implementing new technologies for instructional purposes in a standardized way, promoting individual schools to design their very own educational situation to accommodate a tailored implementation rather than a generic one. Certifying educators as qualified teachers before they instruct under an IT implemented instruction is also proposed in this research.

Harriet J. Kidombo, Christopher M. Gakuu and Anne Ndiritu, in a study titled "Institutional Management and integration of information and communication technology in teaching and learning in selected Kenyan schools", place capital importance when implementing new technologies in class on the principals at schools.

Liisa Ilomäki, in a Finnish research paper supervised by the University of Turku back in 2008, reviews the adequacy of the skills possessed by students regarding new technologies, along with their working habits. The generation gap existing between students and teachers, and the pedagogic characteristics of the incorporation of new technologies to the standard teaching methodologies are also analyzed.

The infrastructure needed to include new technologies at school is dealt with by a study titled "Developing the use of information and communication technology to enhance teaching and learning in East African schools", which was published in 2010 by the Center for Commonwealth Education and the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development, and so is the affordability of incorporating the necessary gadgets. The existing barriers impeding IT implemented teaching are review, and potential solutions as partnerships or investors willing to help bringing down the aforementioned barriers are also considered.

In 2004 Dr Penny Tearle, from the University of Exeter, published a study titled "The implementation of ICT in UK secondary schools". In it, the effect of the visibility of new technologies as an appealing vision encouraging students to increase their use is explained. Other important aspects including the reliability, accessibility and updating plans of new technologies are stated, since a lack of any of them could lead to a failed implementation.

The scaffolding aspect of a curriculum which specifies the implementation of new technologies, and the importance of professional development in form of in-services for teachers to attend and train themselves on how to include new technologies in their instruction are covered in a 2011 study conducted by Lim, S. K., Tay L. Y. and Lim, C. P., from different schools located in Singapore and Hong Kong respectively.

Regarding the training of teachers who are involved in ICT implemented teaching, studying independently and attending seminars are the two commonest ways for teachers to educate themselves on new technologies and their potential when used as an instructional aid, although workshops are the preferred option, according to a study conducted by Bernard Yaw, from the University of Cape Coast, which was published by the end of 2012.

Differences among schools implementing ICT with very different socioeconomic status are studied by Gilbert Leslie Prince, in a study published in 2007 by the University of Rhodes. Possible reasons for the aforementioned differences are listed, including differences in funding, in the skills of teachers and in the appropriateness of the facilities.

Some studies even restrict their interests to specific geographic locations and their ICT use at school. Case in point, Laaria Mingaine from the University of Shangai, who last year published her work on ICT implementation in public secondary schools in Kenya, analyzing the technological growth experienced by education in that country from such diverse standpoints as electricity availability or the skills of teachers.

The specifics of implementing ICT while teaching English as a second language are also covered by some researchers, as it is the case of Maria del Mar Camacho Marti, who published her doctoral thesis under the Universitat Rovira I Virgili from Tarragona back in 2006. Her research focuses on the use of the web to both teach and learn, and it also highlights the importance of maximizing the access to ICT resources and to use ICT to interact with native speakers and to gain access to numerous authentic materials.

2.2 Etymology

IT has been defined in many different ways, including the utilization of computing in order to manage data or the mere study of computerized systems, always considering peripheral industries such as software and hardware development, electronics or even the Internet. A wider consideration of the concept Information Technology would include not only computing but also other technologies distributing information such as the television or the telephone.

Actually, the term IT was first coined by Harold J. Leavitt and Thomas L. Whistler back in 1958, since they first used it in an article published by the Harvard Business Review. The authors claimed the necessity of a concept embracing the new technologies of their time.

Its initial definition was as the conjunction of computers, operations research methods, and simulation techniques, but it failed at receiving popularity, so it shifted from the original aforementioned definition to refer to the expected convergence of the computing, media, and telecommunications industries and their technologies, gaining popularity due to the enthusiasm grown around a computerized revolution that was to lead to a new world.

The popularization of the term brought along dissociation with the communicative aspect of the concept, focusing more on the computing field. Thus, the terms computing and IT are commonly confused when they should not, since computing originally referred to calculations, which was the original task computers had, whereas IT dealt with communication systems of any kind, including from the ancient ways of communicating information to the groundbreaking communicative breakthrough advances.

In fact, IT is commonly divided into four developmental periods labeled pre-mechanical, mechanical, electromechanical and electronic phases.

The pre-mechanical phase refers to the age when humans first started communicating, being it by means of language use or picture drawings, until the first alphabets were developed and with them appeared storing inventions such as the Chinese paper made from rags, which had been preceded by a previous utilization of clay and even papyrus plants, prior to the first books and libraries being developed.

The mechanical age ranges from the 15th and the 19th centuries and it contains a period of new technologies blossoming, most of them oriented to calculating, being the Pascaline especially worth mentioning, although the volumes of these inventions were out of proportion.

The electromechanical phase is based on the second half of the 19th century up until the first half of the 20th century, and in this period of time telecommunication arose for the very first time. Examples of it are the development of the Morse code, the telegraph, the radio or even the telephone. Harvard´s Mark 1 computer was the pinnacle of IT in this phase, being it the first large scale digital computer and having ridiculously enormous dimensions.

Telecommunication is still expected to prove relevant if we refer to Bartolome (1989: 14), who stated that the educative change in the 21st century would be influenced by the development of telecommunications rather than by IT and video breakthroughs.

The electronic age is considered to include from 1940 to our present days, and most of its excelling inventions are covered in this project along different sections. The inventions of the

electronic age vary very much from each other because of the constant development in the field, being representative the changes experienced by punch cards being substituted by magnetic tape first, and by circuits later, to finally turn into chips and the creation of the first personal computer which was developed by Apple.

2.3 Aims of teaching languages both then and now

Language teaching has always been obviously related to the main purpose of learning languages at any given point of time, as it would not seem logical otherwise.

According to this, the grammar-translation traditional methodology was defined by the purpose of gaining access to information by reading and translating texts written in foreign languages.

Methodologies based on linguistic immersion respond to the oral fluency demand of the time when they were implemented, as it is the case of the Direct Method approach.

Up until now, communication has been established as the main objective of language learners, and that has been addressed by the communicative methodology, which has unstressed grammar as the main linguistic aspect ambitioning to achieve a more balanced mastery of four skills: written and oral comprehension and production. Authentic materials have been selected by this methodology to mimic real life linguistic situations, improving the communicative abilities of students by resembling real interaction scenarios.

Every methodology fits the needs of the students, being it definitely relevant regarding the success of the utilization of each promoted methodology. Since needs are constantly changing and evolving, methodologies are to follow suit, so that new needs are covered best by the most appropriate and updated approach.

The appearance of new revolutionary technologies, added to the current globalization aspect of life, would pose new linguistic challenges that require methodological revision and renewal in order for new demands to be met.

2.4 Cross-curricular studies

IT reading presents users with different possibilities, not only learning foreign languages, although this is the discipline it fits best because of its intrinsic characteristics.

Diverse subjects are to take profit from the resourceful reading resulting from the implementation of new technologies. Thus, Science teachers have the opportunity of instructing contents by using tablet friendly electronic books containing specific aspects such as hyperlinks, interactive charts or video embedded texts, to name just a few.

Music specialists are prone to include technology among their traditional teaching tools, mainly music instruments. Electronic books can include music files interacting with the reader, mixing sound and image, or converting one into another. Apart from electronic books containing tones, there are many music related apps to be run on tablets, mainly synthesizers generating multiple sounds imitating instruments and therefore cutting budgeting costs, but also recording

apps turning tablets into portable recorders with added capabilities such as playing and editing recorded files, or even sharing them online.

Computing is obviously one of the subjects where IT implemented reading can be transferred, just by the incorporation of technological devices in this type of reading instruction, falling them mostly into the computing category.

Mathematics usually follows books full of static exercises to be solved, whereas electronic textbooks could activate the exercises so that objects and numbers turn into movable elements to be used as part of the solutions. Hands-on materials are basically utilized while instructing Mathematics as a complement to textbooks. Meanwhile, electronic textbooks could be considered hands-on materials themselves.

Arts teachers employ many materials for students to create paintings, and most of the pieces the students work on are not editable. Electronic books, aided by painting apps, allow students to use a tablet as a real canvas with the only help of a finger. Electronic painting is totally editable, and it represents both an integral educational option by combining art and technology usage, and also a budgetary relief by reducing the costs of having to purchase numerous painting materials.

Paper history books are carved into stone by the mere fact of not being modifiable. Whereas most of the times facts included in History books are not refuted, they sometimes face controversial discoveries outdating them immediately. IT implemented textbooks are editable, avoiding compromising conflicts to deal with in case contents are refuted by future research on that matter.

Apart from subjects instructed in Elementary Schools, more specific areas included in fields such as Medicine, Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Architecture, among many others, could also benefit from the implementation of new technologies.

2.5 Recent developments

Every day there are new developments. New products are launched and new product ideas and applications of information technology evolve. Futuristic devices such as smartphones have already turned into a reality, providing people with huge technological possibilities in a portable tiny gadget, as opposed to humongous sizes for really contained technological power that surrounded us not so long ago.

Cloud storage is also a reality nowadays, with really popular servers offering storage capabilities, being dropbox just an example. By cloud storing, hard disks are not really necessary anymore because, as long as an Internet connection is available, data can be retrieved anytime and anywhere in the form of downloads. Khan Academy, which has already been discussed in the introduction chapter, is only one of many institutions to offer educational contents downloadable through cloud storage, instead of just offering storage capabilities. Among many other institutions following suit, renowned organizations are included, being the Massachusetts Institute of Technology just one of them.

Certain new technologies with a potential application in education are still in their trial stages, being them not marketed yet, or distributed in really small numbers worldwide. Among them, Google glass and 3D printers really stand out because of the possibilities they are about to present their users with.

Google glasses are based on augmented reality technology, which adds technological connectivity and data access to regular sight through an optical head mounted display. Needless to say, the educational possibilities of utilizing such a device with instructional purposes will be endless, transforming traditional books, or even electronic books, into portals of information to open up before the eyes of the readers.

Limited units are available in the United States from April, 2014, but numerous developers are already working on applications to be launched from the device in order to maximize its usage possibilities.

3D printing is revolutionizing the printing possibilities worldwide, presenting users with the possibility of creating three-dimensional solid objects by continuously laying out shapes. Nanotechnology is responsible for this achievement, which is obviously resourceful in certain educational fields, mainly Science related subjects, which will be capable of duplicating complex structures for students to study.

Even though language teaching is not the subject to benefit the most from 3D printing, it could be beneficial to utilize three-dimensional printing technologies to rethink book formats, since adding a dimension to them changes reading into experiencing, being the latter far better regarding students retention of contents, apart from being obviously engaging.

Technologies being studied in order to achieve future applications that could be utilized in education include eye tracking, leap motion, voice recognition or virtual reality. Eye tracking, leap motion and voice recognition all address the same problems derived from prolonged uses of touch pad devices.

Eye tracking is based on webcam mounted devices which interpret human eye movements as action triggers, enabling users to control operative systems without even touching the screen. This would allow students to read electronic books without holding a device, just by looking at it, relieving them from having to lift weight, speeding the act of scrolling through a text, or turning pages from electronic books while doing so.

Leap motion has a similar effect when compared to eye tracking, since they both enable users to control handheld devices without really holding them at all. The difference between leap motion and eye tracking is that leap motion grants control over operative systems by waving hands in the air in front of the device instead of just by looking at it. Anyway, it equally results in the possibility of interacting with books without really touching them, ending with healthy concerns derived from the accumulation of germs on touch screens, for example.

Voice recognition also enables leading operative systems just by sounding certain instruction, which is currently being utilized by Apple in their latest OS versions in the form of Siri helper, among many other companies. Educational possibilities of voice recognition range from pronunciation checks, to accessibility opportunities for disabled students, to merely interacting with devices just by talking to them.

Virtual reality is being worked upon by using helmets providing users with multiple peripheral high definition displays creating a surrounding effect recreating the effect of actually experiencing what is being played before our eyes. VR allows students and teachers to utilize immerse multimedia, and by simulating physical presence it makes possible for students to experience interacting with native speakers or with authentic material, or even for readers to include themselves in the actual story they are working with.

Even though the amount of new technologies being developed bring high hopes along, the real benefits of implementing them in class is still to be discovered, and only time will tell if the expectations and the anticipation derived from their potential possibilities would really translate into a meaningful scenario.

3. THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter focuses on the theoretical and analytical framework utilized for the analysis of this dissertation. In it, both the research objectives, the procedural aspects of each chapter and its analysis, as well as the data analyzed can be found.

3.1 Research objectives

The intention of this dissertation is to contribute to the debate about finding the best way to start teaching second languages in Spanish schools at earlier stages of education than what it had been happening until now.

It aims at explaining the reasons why importing guided reading techniques from American schools, in order to make a difference in second language acquisition at the very first stages of education, could represent one feasible option Spanish schools could benefit from.

It also aims at updating the aforementioned guided reading techniques while importing them, because the renewal meant by the implementation of IT for instructional purposes has already begun in the United States, and the characteristics of current computing devices make that implementation possible, enhancing the benefits of such techniques.

Finally, the design of a new methodology supporting the use of IT implemented guided reading techniques is also ambitioned, being it brand new or refurbished, renewing already existing methodologies that need updating to accomplish such an innovative task.

3.2 Procedures followed for the individual analysis in each chapter

This thesis contains a total of fifteen chapters, beginning from a generic standpoint which will specify as the dissertation develops, leaving broad educational descriptions aside in order to achieve the empirical analyses needed to prove the validity of the hypothesis thrown throughout the document.

The first chapter looks at the importance of studying English as a second language in general, and also at the importance of doing it in Spain in particular. It also reviews the characteristic features of the English learning process in Spanish elementary schools. Examples are given regarding pioneering educational programs being implemented worldwide which include new technologies in their instruction, while clarifications are made regarding the coexistence of computers and teachers, avoiding some common considerations portraying IT as a threat to be feared by educators who could face being substituted by machines. Finally, both the objectives and the sequencing find a place at the end of this chapter, being them explained at its closing part.

The second chapter reviews previous studies holding connections with the topics this dissertation deals with. It is also taken into consideration here the creation and evolution of information and communication technology as a concept, as well as its possibilities in terms of usage and applications.

The third chapter focuses on the theoretical and analytical framework used for the analysis of this dissertation, including the research objectives, the analysis of the creation of each chapter, and some information about the data chosen to be studied.

The fourth chapter focuses on the methodology followed to complete the dissertation, including the paradigms being followed by it, a description of what is being done, the proposal of a research statement to be contrasted with the gathered data from the reading scores of schools utilizing guided reading techniques, and an explanation of the steps taken when working on the thesis, so that a better understanding of it can be attained by its readers.

It is in the fifth chapter where the context of the study is laid out, including information from the schools taking part in the study such as the number of students and teachers, their specific characteristics if any, the timeline of the data gathering process, trying to compare the different sources of guided reading process data in an effort to look for similarities and differences that might be a factor in the results.

The sixth chapter includes the legal framework shaping English language learning in elementary schools, including the interesting evolution of the American laws in terms of education, but also looking at the diversity of the Spanish language learning and teaching situation, since it varies greatly from zones with and without more than one official language in their curricula.

The seventh chapter zooms on IT applied language teaching, analyzing its process from the time computing first reached schools to present scenarios. The progress experienced by hardware and software is also studied in this chapter, reflecting their adaptability and the resourcefulness of current computers and programs as opposed to the lack of practicality of

machines that were not invented so long ago. Explaining the segregating barriers being overcome by IT implemented teaching, as well as other relevant benefits in terms of social, economic and even medical applications of computing in education prove that IT is far from detrimental in this field.

The eighth chapter analyzes the different teaching methodologies that have dominated schooling throughout time, ranging from classical to modern methodologies. This information is provided with the intent of both understanding where contemporary teaching methods come from and suggesting the possible benefits of accompanying the exponential growth IT implemented teaching is experiencing with a new methodology sustaining it.

Guided reading is the main topic of the ninth chapter, and it is so because guided reading is being analyzed and proposed by this dissertation as the methodology to import to Spanish elementary schools in order to update the ways of teaching English as a second language in Spain, at the earliest stages of schooling.

The tenth chapter is dedicated to studying bilingualism, since the two schools analyzed here aim at reaching bilingualism from different standpoints. Having been a bilingual teacher in the United States myself, I realized how big of an impact it has on children in general, and on Spanish speaking students in particular. Helping young learners to achieve a better acquisition of English as a second language in Spain, by mirroring what is being one overseas, is what drives me on a daily basis.

The eleventh chapter highlights the aforementioned importance of developing an integrative IT implemented ESL method, because computers have been underutilized by schools and it is only now that most institutions really consider scaffolding and regulating the usage of new technologies, so that they are taken real profit from.

The twelfth chapter includes the results that appeared after comparing the reading progress of third graders from two schools differing in many aspects but sharing the use of guided reading techniques when teaching English. This way, looking at guided reading as a unifying factor, its full potential and adaptability can be analyzed to justify proposing its importation into Spanish schools now that the instruction of English as a second language is being planned at earlier stages of schooling than it was before.

The thirteenth chapter unveils the conclusions reached after studying the content of the complete dissertation, and mainly after contrasting the feasibility of the objectives that had been initially stated with the information provided by the analysis of the gathered data.

The fourteenth chapter collects the list of varied references consulted when working on this thesis, being them an essential part of the process.

Finally, the fifteenth chapter contains the full versions of the interviews conducted with relevant educational representatives, as well as the reading data obtained by the third graders analyzed here, representing their reading progress by showing the reading levels the students reached both at the beginning and at the end of the academic year.

3.3 Corpus analyzed

The collection of data gathered to be analyzed responds to the reading progress experienced, under guided reading techniques, by the 2007-2008 Nelson Elementary School third grade bilingual students that I taught.

These students, having Spanish as their mother tongue because of being immigrants, most of them coming from Mexico, were being taught on how to read in English, resembling the upcoming situation Spain is to face by incorporating English as a second language as part of the curriculum from the very first stages of education.

Data from the American School of Valencia 2012-2013 third graders was also retrieved and analyzed, including the reading development experienced by the students throughout the school year, under guided reading instruction.

ASV enrolls mostly Spaniards, and it also differs from Nelson in linguistic terms, since ASV is not a transitional bilingual school, but an immersion school instead. Given that ASV is not a public school, but a private school with tuition fares to cover, socioeconomics is another gap distancing ASV from Nelson students.

In order to evaluate the reading progress of the students, both from the American School of Valencia and from John Nelson Elementary School, letters declaring their individual levels were assigned. These letters were related to the grade of difficulty of the books they were capable of reading properly. The books were also graded according to the difficulty they posed on students, and benchmarks ambitioned by different grade levels marked the correctness of their progress in terms of pacing.

4. METHODOLOGY

This chapter gives a detailed account of how the study was conducted. In it, sequenced references to the different stages of the study are included, structuring the project.

The aforementioned stages include a description of the paradigm under which this study could be categorized, the creation of a research statement, the data gathering, the data analysis and the process of writing the thesis.

4.1 The descriptive paradigm

This study and its characteristics fall mostly under the descriptive paradigm, as opposed to the exploratory and explanatory research paradigms.

The exploratory paradigm includes researching about a matter which is almost unknown by the author, whereas the explanatory paradigm feeds from already existing theories and hypothesizes from them.

Since I have acquired guided reading experience myself, and I have experienced working for American schools, my background knowledge on the research matter rejects the explanatory paradigm as an option.

The contemporariness of the digitalization of guided reading techniques proposed, promoted and studied here means a lack of previous studies to hypothesize from, so the explanatory paradigm is also not valid in this case.

Ethnography was relevant for this research, since Nelson students whose reading progress is being analyzed here are first generation Hispanic students, but ASV students included in the analysis are mostly from Spain, although to a lesser extent some ASV students come from different European countries.

A descriptive paradigm is utilized when researching a matter which is already known by the author, focusing on describing what has been found in order to clear any observations necessary.

When looking at the research methods being utilized, this research also falls under the descriptive paradigm, because it respects the combination of both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Exploratory paradigms only use qualitative studies and explanatory paradigms utilize quantitative research techniques.

Qualitative methods are both subjective and inductive, ranging from observation and content analysis, to conducting interviews. In this research, interviews were conducted to include authorized opinions on the effectiveness of guided reading techniques being imported into the Spanish early schooling in order to teach English as a second language.

Quantitative methods are both objective and deductive, including experiments, analysis, tests or even surveys. This research includes the analysis of the reading progression of two

different groups, one of them receiving bilingual guided reading instruction in the United States, and the other one receiving monolingual guided reading instruction in Spain.

4.2 Description of the study

This study relates to the descriptive paradigm. Thus, it shares some of the purpose and methodology characteristics mentioned in the preceding section.

The purpose is to evaluate the reading progress obtained through the implementation of guided reading techniques, regarding second language learning at early schooling stages. In order to evaluate the benchmarks obtained under guided reading training, American bilingual schools provide us with the required insight to assess the potential validity of the system being transferred to Spain.

The research statement was held with flexibility throughout the development of the study, following suit with the interpretative paradigm methodology, and data was collected from different sources and through different channels, being later on analyzed in an inductive way.

As a consequence of this process, the thesis was written including both descriptions and interpretations, to scaffold the creation of a theory about both the feasibility of guided reading being installed in the early stages of second language learning in the Spanish schooling, and the enhancing possibilities of it being supplemented by the implementation of new technologies taking guided reading to a whole new level, and matching best the specific demands and needs of students at the earliest stages of schooling.

4.3 The creation of a research statement

When back in 2005 guiding reading techniques were revealed to me as second language teaching tools, utilized at such an early stages of education in the United States of America, as part of my training and daily work as a bilingual teacher in American Elementary Schools, the positive results impacted me so much that I immediately thought of the potential benefits of applying the techniques in Spain.

The idea made even more sense given that Spain has traditionally struggled with the acquisition of foreign languages. Recently, the idea of dedicating more instruction time to second language learning through every schooling stage is being given serious consideration, and the very first steps directing to that change are being taken.

It is in this specific scenario where guided reading being implemented in Spain as a method to include second language teaching at the earliest stages of education presents itself as a possibility, since it has been successful in the USA where it has long been utilized.

Once I came back from my teaching experience in Illinois, I embarked on the development of this study with the mere ambition of importing American guided reading techniques to Spain, convinced that it was the perfect solution to meet the growing demands of early second language teaching in Spain.

During the period of time after my return to Spain and prior to the beginning of this thesis, new computing devices have steadily been introduced, each one more portable and more affordable than its predecessor.

The period of global economic turmoil hardened the possibilities of investing in projects, making the original idea of importing guided reading to Spain in order to teach second languages at school even harder to accomplish.

Since my confidence in the validity of the system is firm, I thought of an IT implemented version of the guided reading techniques I knew, as a way to turn the difficulty that the economic situation meant into a positive aspect by reinforcing the affordability of this digitalized version, which on top of that could represent not only the mere adaptation of a successful technique, but to upgrade it while doing it.

This way, the initial research statement went from the validity of American guided reading techniques, being imported into the Spanish educational system as a tool to achieve successful second language teaching at the earliest stages of schooling, to the idea of an IT implemented guided reading methodology to meet the same demand but fitting best in the reality of the moment.

4.4 Data gathering and analyzing

Data has been collected from different sources such as my own annotations as a Nelson Elementary School third grade bilingual teacher during the school year 2007-2008, the information included in the Illinois Schools Cards electronic archive found on the Internet and also interviewing staff from both the American School of Valencia and the 205 Rockford Public Schools district.

Working as a bilingual teacher at Nelson Elementary School in the Rockford Public School District in Illinois gave me access to the reading marks my students began grade level at, as well as the reading progress they experienced, apart from obviously my own observation while instructing the group of students myself, by comparing the progression of the reading levels the students experienced with the benchmarks accomplishments of the individuals of the group.

My bilingual third graders were met by me from Monday to Friday in reduced groups never exceeding five people, while the rest of the students worked in the surrounding learning centers. Three twenty minutes sessions were developed each day, being the three guided reading groups of students assigned on Monday to be back on Wednesday and also on Friday to the reading center, whereas the three groups reading on Tuesday were to repeat center on Thursday, having less slotted time than their Monday partners because of having achieved higher reading scores.

This made a total of three hundred minutes of guided reading instruction per week, which resulted sufficient to have an impact on the reading capabilities of the students, easing their benchmark achieving process.

The data collected during the aforementioned sessions represented a random sample of the effects of guided reading techniques when teaching English language as a second language at an early phase of education.

Electronic school cards include standardized testing results of every grade level in every school and, since in the state of Illinois ACCESS testing was taken by elementary bilingual students instead of ISAT testing, the standardized reading results of every single bilingual grade

level in every school was available for me to analyze the impact guided reading techniques had on the students.

American School of Valencia is one of the few Spanish schools to not only include but really make use of guided reading instruction. Since my interest resided on the potential benefits of importing guided reading into Spain, deriving from traditional techniques into an updated IT based version of the instruction, in order to meet the incoming demand posed by the agreement of including English language teaching earlier in the Spanish curriculum, cross-referencing reading progress data from Nelson Elementary School with the information ASV provided me with was a must.

Reading progress of students from the American School of Valencia, when compared to the reading progress of Nelson Elementary School, would show the differences, if any, of using traditional guided reading techniques in US soil with bilingual students versus using traditional guided reading techniques in Spain and out of a transitional bilingual scenario.

4.5 Writing the thesis

The process followed when writing this thesis derives from traditional ones since during my teaching period in the United States guided reading techniques being utilized there instantly caught my attention but, at that point of time, it was unclear for me what to do with the information I was receiving due to that exposure to the American system and its ways of dealing with English language teaching.

On my mind was nothing else than mastering guided reading techniques in order to adapt to the system that was employing me at the time, and learn as much as I could from the experience in case it could potentially be used back in Spain.

Thus, guided reading teaching techniques were my priority, and data was gathered just as part of my learning process, far from being foreseen as potential corpus included in a thesis at that moment.

After fulfilling the period of time included in the US Visiting Teacher program promoted by the Spanish Ministry of Education I was a recipient of, Public High Schools ESL teaching has been my field of work but my interest for guided reading has never decayed.

This made me consider the option of applying the knowledge acquired after such a privileged experience elsewhere, and pursuing a doctorate would provide me with the frame needed to channel my inquietude.

The idea of guided reading being a feasible option to be imported into Spanish education accompanied me since the very moment the technique was revealed to me, and the scaffolding necessary for me to express that could materialize in the form of a research topic.

During the time taken by the compulsory academic steps required prior to embarking on this research, micro-computing bloomed and tablets were seriously worked upon, representing the pinnacle of a new computing era.

Affordable, portable and with considerable computing capacities, they began pushing traditional desktop computers aside in certain areas of application, and education was obviously one of them. Different students sharing a single computer, intermediary gadgets to create input being necessary, or computers being a stationary element inside the classroom were traditions that collapsed and a new reality started seeming possible.

By the time this PhD thesis was to be faced as the final element of my doctorate, it was clear for me that forecasting the possibility of importing a computerized version of traditional guided reading techniques in order to teach English language to Spanish Elementary School students was my goal.

The difficulty of finding Spanish Elementary Schools implementing guided reading techniques when teaching English as a second language to students, was a reality. Needless to say, schools implementing computerized guided reading techniques were nonexistent.

The American School of Valencia is the school that mimics best what is being utilized in the USA in terms of traditional guided reading techniques, so interviews were made to analyze their insight in the matter.

With all the gathered data, and the hypothesis being stated, research started focusing on the evolution of teaching methodologies throughout time, given that every new need appearance had been accompanied by one scaffolding methodology ensuring that need being met, and the arousal of a new need regarding English as a second language being taught earlier that it had ever been was real, evaluating the necessity of a new methodology being considered along with that new reality.

5. THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

5.1 American teaching experience

Since I worked as a bilingual teacher for the Rockford Public Schools District, in the state of Illinois, the possibility of collecting data was presented to me on a daily basis.

From 2005 to 2006, I taught first grade bilingual at Walker Elementary School, and the year after that I taught third grade bilingual at the same school. From 2007 to 2008, I kept teaching third grade bilingual but not at the same school, I did it at Nelson Elementary School instead.

Given that my first grade experience represented my first contact with the American schooling, it served me as a training year to understand and try mastering guided reading techniques. My first year teaching third grade was my second year teaching in the US, so my adaptation was better because of the experience accumulated prior to that moment, regarding American schooling in general.

This is why my data collection refers to my second year teaching third grade, since the background knowledge needed to interpret bilingual guided reading data had already been acquired by me during my previous years teaching in the United States.

Although difficulties such as experiencing teaching in the US for the first time, or facing the task of teaching a grade level that had not been taught by me before, had been resolved by the time I taught third grade for the second time in my last year as a bilingual teacher in the United

States, as agreed in the visiting teacher program promoted by the Spanish Ministry of Education, the fact of having to change schools kept challenging me since a new school, even repeating grade level and having previous experience, meant little adaptation that were to be made.

Thus, the data collected for the present study comes both from the bilingual third grade class I taught back in 2007-2008 at John Nelson Elementary School in Rockford, Illinois, and also from the 2012-2013 third graders at the American School of Valencia. The school settings are to be explained in this section representing the frame in which to interpret the resulting analysis.

5.2 School

Nelson Elementary School is a K-5 elementary school placed at 623 15th street in Rockford, Illinois. Led by Principal Stephen Francisco, it was named after one of its main benefactors, John Nelson, a Swedish immigrant to the United States who patented the sock-knitting machine in 1869.

He began manufacturing socks in Rockford back in 1890, to later develop a version of socks without seams in the heel, which were extremely popular and ended being called Rockfords because of their place of origin.

Because of Rockfords being imitated due to their popularity, John Nelson and his Rockford based company, Nelson Knitting, introduced red heels to stand out from imitators. Oddly enough, this introduction of the red heel was what made the creation of the sock monkey possible, since the red heel parts were used representing the mouth of the very first sock monkeys. These are stuffed animals resembling monkeys, and they have become important in the

American folk art culture, being them first made using Rockfords because of the red lips represented by the red heel part of the socks invented by John Nelson.

Sock monkeys are currently being mass-manufactured, and they have derived from the original red lip Rockfords to striped, vintage, polka dotted or even mismatched socks as containers. Being their place of birth, the city of Rockford still commemorates them, considering sock monkeys part of its history, and part of American culture for the last century.

Nelson Knitting ended up being acquired by Fox River Mills Inc. in 1992, but the spirit of John Nelson is very much alive. During my year teaching at Nelson Elementary School, several projects promoted by the Arts department having sock monkeys as their main base were undergone, including the creation of a human sized sock monkey that Lorie Painter, one of the Arts teachers I worked with, developed. She is the very same Arts teacher that taught the bilingual third graders whose reading scores are being analyzed here.

The American School of Valencia, founded in 1980, is a private bilingual school running from prekindergarten up to twelfth grade, and it is placed at 29 Sierra Calderona Avenue in Puzol, Valencia. It is currently considered one of the best schools in Spain, and it is one of the fifty Spanish schools instructing and administering the International Baccalaureate.

In 1974, the company Ford España, S.A. was established in Valencia, and many American and British families came over to create and develop the company. Within a short time, it became evident that schooling for the children of these families was needed and thus the Anglo-American School of Valencia in the town of Rocafort was created.

An increasing number of children from Valencia enrolled in the school, so that when the foreign families returned to their countries of origin, these Spanish families wanted to continue educating their children in a bilingual school. Los Monasterios was selected as the site, and the Spanish-English bilingual school, Colegio Hispano Norteamericano was built in 1980.

The name was changed to American School of Valencia to reflect the fact that the language of instruction, except in Spanish subjects, is English.

Beginning with only 27 students, they now have 746 students from nursery to grade 12.

5.3 Courses and classes

Nelson includes two mainstream and one bilingual kindergarten groups, two mainstream and one bilingual first grade groups, two mainstream and two bilingual second graders, two mainstream and two bilingual third graders, three mainstream and one bilingual forth grade classes, and three mainstream and one bilingual fifth grade groups.

ASV schools from Preschool up to twelfth grade, as stated by the Middle States Association Colleges and Schools, an American institution accrediting ASV.

5.4 Classrooms

The 22 classes the Nelson school utilizes to accommodate students are currently divided into three kindergarten rooms, three first grade rooms, four second grade rooms, four third grade rooms, four forth grade rooms, and four fifth grade rooms.

ASV uses 54 classrooms divided into 2 classes at each grade level except for nursery where there is only one class.

5.5 Students

Nelson currently enrolls a total of 502 students. My 2007-2008 Nelson Elementary School third grade bilingual class was just composed by nineteen students, divided into ten boys and nine girls, all of them second generation immigrants.

The ten boys of the group were Carlos Andrade, Ulises Barragan, Daniel Diaz, Jonathon Diaz, Juan Diaz, Daniel Galindo, Sergio Macias, Nestor Moreno, Jimmy Ruvalcaba and Luis Marquez. It is worth mentioning here that Daniel and Juan Diaz were brothers, being Jonathon Diaz their cousin. Both Carlos Andrade and Juan Diaz had special education teachers supporting them due to their specific needs, since they struggled both in reading and in mathematics.

The nine girls of the group were Vanessa Botello, Blanca Ceniceros, Nayeli Ceniceros, Kenia Escorcia, Judith Gonzalez, Hazzel Lopez, Jatshiry Miralrio, Yanit Rodriguez and Yutzil Romero.

ASV currently enrolls 746 students, being most of them Spanish although the ethnicity of ASV also includes few students from other nationalities and cultures. An estimated ten percent of the students enrolled at ASV are not Spanish. Their ethnicity is diverse since there are students from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, South Africa, United Arabs Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The 2012-2013 ASV third graders being analyzed in terms of reading progress throughout guided reading instruction were divided into 2 classes of 27 students, for a total of 54 students, being 85% of the students native Spanish speakers.

5.6 Teachers

Nelson Elementary School currently enrolls 502 students and employs 29 teachers, ending in a ratio of 17,31 students per teacher, and an average class size of 22,82 students per room, since it utilizes 22 classrooms to accommodate the students.

ASV currently enrolls 746 students and employs 65 teachers, representing a ratio of 11.47 students per teacher, with an average class size of 13,81 students per room, since it uses 54 classrooms to accommodate the students.

5.7 Selection of sites and participants

The selection of site and participants responded to the ease experienced, regarding guided reading data collection, by having worked as a bilingual teacher for American schools which implemented bilingual programs.

My own students at the time represented the best participants possible, since first-hand experience and knowledge about their evolution was not only provided to me but also unavoidable, given that my teaching duties included their daily guided reading sessions, as well as assessing the benchmarks acquisition of every individual student.

Having acquired traditional guided reading data on site and, after returning to Spain to teach ESL for Valencian public high schools, research led me to refined IT implemented instruction being worked upon in American schools, wondering how much of an impact it had regarding Language and Arts.

This made me get in touch with those schools since their pioneering trials embodied my idea of IT implemented guided reading techniques, and their candidacy as the second language teaching method fitting best the demands of the Spanish education in terms of early second language acquisition.

Choosing ASV to cross-reference the data obtained from Nelson Elementary School was easy because of representing the closest institution to an American bilingual school Valencia had to offer. On top of that, it met the criteria required since ASV implements guided reading techniques, offering contrastive information which proved useful when accompanying and comparing with the original American guided reading progress of the students.

Willingness expressed by the ASV staff was also a decisive factor taken into account when choosing the Spanish school needed to obtain results from, since from the very beginning, various representatives from the American School of Valencia accepted being interviewed, offered their compiled reading progress data, assisting me in a tremendous show of solidarity and unrewarded help.

5.8 Summary

The participants in the study were learning English at two different schools, from two different countries far from each other, being them bilingual in their instructional methodologies.

Nelson students shared Hispanic origins whereas most of ASV students were native Spaniards. On top of that, Nelson is based on transitional bilingualism aiming at mainstream monolingualism by diminishing the mother tongue usage of the students in favor of the strengthening of English, but the American School of Valencia implements monolingualism, being English the language of instruction in every subject other than Spanish, targeting balanced bilingualism for the students by developing their English knowledge rather than weakening their mother tongue mastery.

Third grade was chosen as the grade level of preference for this study because of having being taught by myself in the case of John Nelson Elementary School, and due to comparative intentions and allowance on the side of the administrators in the case of the American School of Valencia.

Three classes of an intermediate level of general English were chosen to be observed and analyzed, one third grade class from Nelson Elementary School in Rockford, Illinois, including nineteen students and two third grade classes from the American School of Valencia in Spain, including fifty-four students.

Teachers were either native speakers of English or bilingual speakers, and they all had previous experience teaching guided reading in bilingual schools. Neither the teachers nor the teachers were told about this project at the time they were being monitored or analyzed, since ASV data was gathered after the students had finished their instruction, and Nelson data was collected prior to this investigation being commenced.

6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK REGARDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Early schooling regarding second language acquisition has been proven beneficial, so a solid and consistent legal framework, backing the scenario up, is needed to better implement the theory at school level.

Muñoz (2000: 86) agrees with the idea of the main aspects taking profit from early second language teaching being the motivation and the attitude of the students. Elementary school students see computerized gadgets as fun items, and their teachers translate that into engaging tools to draw the attention of pupils, being IT the enabler of that ideal situation.

Although IT usage is beneficial for the motivation of the students, an overuse of this tool could derive in a loss of its effect. Attention spans when teaching elementary school students are incredibly short and shifting, so IT being utilized as a temporary implementation proves positively revolutionary in the dynamic of the teaching day, but excessive exposure to it feeds reluctance on the students.

The very first stages of schooling are accompanied by natural willingness on the students when approaching learning, as noticed by Hoffman (1986: 200) as he stated that "most children enter school eager, willing, and motivated to learn". That could be maintained with the implementation of funny looking IT applied teaching, but also ruined by serious extended computer.

Even though IT applied language teaching is something relatively new and students would have to get accustomed to experiencing it from scratch, according to Hoffman (1986: 200) students who did not experience preschool have to get accustomed to standard teaching, which is also new for them because of the lack of early education, having to overcome more difficulties than those students who already experienced preschool instruction.

If this ever translated into a real adaptation problem to IT applied instruction at such an early stage, work could be done all through preschool introducing IT applied language teaching basics to the students, so that by the time they enroll into elementary school, they are somewhat used to handling technology related instructing gadgets.

The usage of early IT applied teaching is especially important when dealing with language teaching, since reading is the basic aspect of learning, necessary to successfully perform at these stages of schooling.

Linking literacy and success rates at school appears Olson (1985: 249), who stated that "success in school is intimately related to the early acquisition of literacy".

6.1 International views

In Germany, technoliteracy has been worked upon from the national legal framework for a long time now, by educating students in the standard usage of IT all the way through the national curriculum. This measure aims at reducing the number of people not familiarized with technology and its overall possible applications.

> In the long term, the Federal Republic of Germany aims to establish a system of interlocking, cumulative basic information technology courses covering the entire spectrum of education from schools right through further education. These courses have to enable everyone to continuously broaden and deepen their basic information technology knowledge and skills, without losing their character of basic education for all people.
>
> Hameyer (1989: 25)

Even though it is applied shorter and later than we saw in the German case, Swedish legal framework established the instruction of IT related contents integrated in different subjects, embedded in the national curriculum.

According to the Swedish national curriculum, basic computer education, often referred to as "computer literacy", is a feature of social science, natural science and mathematics subjects during the three senior years of the 9-year compulsory school. All senior levels of the 9-year compulsory school are also to be provided with access to computer hardware and software, as explained by Hameyer (1989: 35).

In the Swedish scenario, because of being integrated instruction instead of specific courses, mandatory effect included every single student in the IT learning context. That is how important they have thought IT learning to be.

Consequently, every student in the Swedish public school system is to be equipped with knowledge providing him with the ability, will and confidence to influence the use of computers in society.

French legal framework raised the number of computing units in school by 1200% in just fifteen years, showcasing a great investment and a great commitment regarding the introduction of technology in schools, popularizing IT instruction by providing necessary hardware for every student.

Taking the data gathered by Hameyer (1989: 41), in France, in 1980, the aim was to install 10,000 microcomputers within the space of six years in all of the 1,200 lycées and, on an experimental basis, in several dozen vacational lycées and colleges. In 1983 the target was raised to 100,000 machines by 1988 in schools as a whole. In January 1985, the target was raised to 120,000 machines installed and 110,000 teachers trained by the end of the year. This was known as the "Informatique pour tous" plan.

On top of that, since computers need certified staff to implement, regulate and supervise their use at school, French law allowed teachers to temporarily waive from their teaching duties to focus on computer training to better carry their duties once their absence ends.

Having properly trained personnel proves vital when evaluating the success of such a technical activity as IT applied teaching. Having either the right equipment or the right staff is useless, both parts really are a must.

In that sense, it is worth quoting Hameyer (1989: 43) "Every year in France, the University Educational Computer Training Centre in each académie enrolls primary and secondary school teachers for a one-year course, who have been granted full leave of absence from their teaching duties".

According to Cavanaugh (2006: 6), standards for the English Language Arts from the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association promote the use of IT applied reading practice as much as they do when it comes to standard reading practice, and the use of technology to develop research is also included by stating that:

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world, to acquire new information, to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace, and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g. libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

State funded programs in the United States of America as Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers To Use Technology, have been training teachers to integrate and implement IT applied teaching in their schools from kindergarten up to 12th grade, so that the digitalization process of education becomes a reality in the near future. Conneo (2004: 2) explains how it aims at teaching more effectively using a variety of technological tools.

Because of how early this program started, how inclusive it was regarding Elementary school grade levels, and how serious it was moneywise, it seems a good model to be inspired by even by present standards when, more than ten years later, investments in education have been severely cut due to the critical international economic scenario, let alone investments in IT applied language teaching in general, and in Spain in particular.

The dizzying numbers are explained by Cumming (1999: 455) "the Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology grant began in 1999, budgeting seventy-five million dollars in funding to be awarded to applying institutions which had to be involved in preparing teachers to use technology".

Under Clinton's administration, school networking was seriously worked upon through the so-called Educational Technology Literacy Challenge, as well as the provision of computers to schools, and training for teachers, enabling generalized computer assisted teaching to better adapt to the demands of the new changing reality of the time.

President Clinton's Educational Technology Literacy Challenge supported the goal of making it possible to use technology to empower learning and support quality instruction, based on modern computers and learning devices being accessible to every student, classrooms being connected to one another and to the outside world, educational software being an integral part of the curriculum and teachers being ready to use and teach technology.

6.2 American situation

Bilingual education in the United States was legally born after former Texas senator Ralph Yarborough passed the Bilingual Education Act in 1968, regulating federal assistance to local education agencies in order to implement bilingual programs for poor Spanish speaking kids who were wanted to learn English. Funds-wise, it was only the beginning since the Bilingual Education Act was approved a budget of 7.5 million dollars and, by 1981, only thirteen years later, 157 million dollars were dedicated to the two hundred bilingual programs running on US soil, most of them being transitional.

Problems did not delay at showing up as schools did not apply for the federal funds budgeted under the Bilingual Education Act since they were not really focusing on bilingualism. A very well-known example of that is seen when looking at Lau v. Nichols case, which reached Supreme Court in 1972 because Chinese kids claimed not to be granted equity regarding education in San Francisco School District. Court recommended school districts to take into account the amount of students with those needs before taking those discriminatory decisions in what was later called “the Lau remedies”

Schools with over twenty students whose mother tongue was not English enrolled, began applying for the funds and started running mainly transitional bilingual programs. This new current ended up establishing until 1994 when the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs, as part and on behalf of the US Department of Education, hardened the situation making it more difficult for schools to apply for federal funds destined to bilingual programs. Applicant schools had to develop a plan to integrate the bilingual program in the school and prove how they would accommodate bilingual students in terms of both curricular and extra-curricular activities, and even after-school programs.

Some administrations were especially against promotion of bilingual programs. Reagan´s showed profound hostility as they believed that preservation of native language meant neglect of English Language Acquisition, which has been proven wrong by the success of bilingualism and biculturalism through both immersion programs and language and culture maintenance programs.

Another legal standout happened in California in 1998, as Proposition 227 was passed by 61% of the California electorate and it mandated English Learners, which are one out of three of the students in that state, to be placed in structured English immersion for a period not to exceed one year before being transferred to mainstream monolingual classrooms.

It prioritized English teaching over any form of bilingual program, which translated into bilingual programs being ended or substituted by English-immersion learning programs. Consequences were rapid as the number of limited English proficient population went all the way up in California from a quarter of a million in 1978 to 1.4 million in 2000.

Some states have followed suit after proposition 227 in California. For example, Arizona approved its proposition 203, similar to the proposition running in California, ending programs that were previously available for ESL students.

More recently, turmoil has reappeared after No Child Left Behind act was passed in 2001 under G.W. Bush administration, making school district directly responsible for LEP population. From then on, LEP students are not let aside Adequate Yearly Progress in schools and they are now taking numerous tests and ranking for them in the school report card, having immediate effect on the federal funds granted to the school. Teachers are now under new pressure as results have become more important than academics for many schools to survive budget-wise.

By 2005 and also under NCLB, all teachers were asked to be not only certified but also categorized as Highly Qualified Teachers, becoming compulsory for them to get their Master Degrees done in case they had not studied it yet. A time frame is given and many teachers are required to go back to class or face termination, causing great difficulties for teachers who cannot afford it or teachers who are close to retirement. Many bilingual teachers are not in possession of a Master Degree so school districts are giving them time to accomplish it by getting their jobs done hiring temporary highly qualified staff and holding their positions until they return as highly qualified teachers. Obviously, the shortage of teachers and the growing number of LEP students willing to enroll in bilingual programs, seem to work against each other.

When it comes down to reality, many US bilingual teachers are first generation immigrants from Mexico who only took their bachelor degree and now they have to either turn into highly qualified teachers or face termination, no matter how experienced they are. That has annoyed lots of teachers who have been let to teach until now and they fear losing their jobs.

On the other hand, it is not easy to recycle while you are working as a full time teacher so many of the bilingual teachers who have to get their master degree are being temporarily replaced by visiting teachers who do have their master degree for as long as the recycling process takes place and they finally meet the requirements of the highly qualified teacher definition provided by the No Child Left Behind. This has recently been one of the main issues in bilingual education under the administration of George W. Bush and it still is.

Other than economically, No Child Left Behind has had great impact on bilingual education, since both the nation-wide and the state-wide all in English tests are really hard for bilingual students because they might have not achieved mastery of English language at that point yet.

It is relatively easy to find bilingual students with broken English in third grade by the time they face their first standardized all in English state test. Since these students currently score in terms of state test ranks, representing school performance as much as monolingual students who perfectly master English language, LEP students have become a problem more than an educational challenge for American bilingual schools.

On top of that it has to be taken into account that, in order for bilingual schools to be loyal to the spirit of the bilingual programs being run, bilingual students who achieve an adequate level of English language use, are to be transitioned out into monolingual mainstream

classrooms, leaving bilingual classrooms only with those students who are really struggling in terms of language. Surprisingly enough, those students who are challenged by the new language acquisition, are also to equally take the standardized state tests without any adaptation. This incongruence leads to situations where newcomers or students having a real hard time learning English, end up facing state tests without being able to decode what they are required to do, being them capable of doing it if it was not for the language barrier or not.

6.3 Spanish situation

The objectives included in the decree 111/2007 regulating elementary education in the Valencian Community state that both Valencian and Spanish are to be known and properly used by the students, including oral and written comprehension and expression, as objective "c" specifies.

At least one foreign language is to be studied, but the objectives only aim at basic communicative competence, which is assumed to enable students to express and comprehend basic messages, according to objective "f" included in the aforementioned decree. Thus, the ambitions embedded in the objectives, regarding language learning in elementary education, are different when comparing English with the native languages of the region.

The objectives also promote using IT, developing the students ability of both criticizing the messages that are received and creating messages of their own, as stated by objective "j".

In the content areas included in the decree in general, and in content area number five in particular, it is specifically mentioned that both Spanish, Valencian and Mathematics are to

receive special treatment because of being instrumental subjects, but foreign languages are not granted the same treatment, even though they are equally instrumental subjects.

Both reading and reading comprehension, oral and written expression, audiovisual communication and IT are to be implemented in every subject according to content area number six.

In the additional statement number one, it is also included in the Decree the possibility of instructing different subjects using a foreign language to do so.

The shared objectives regarding Valencian and Spanish subjects include proper oral and written comprehension and expression, using IT to obtain, interpret and appreciate information and familiarizing with its use as a learning and working tool, using efficiently all four basic communicative skills, developing reading habits.

Silent reading, read aloud, writing skills, reading comprehension and even library and IT software usage can be found in the shared assessment criteria of both Valencian and Spanish subjects.

In the foreword section of the foreign language area of the curriculum, it is stated that Spain, as a member of the European Union, is committed to the implementation of the European Languages teaching, and it is also stated that because of being a language sensitive region, the Valencian Community is to integrate Valencian, Spanish and a Foreign Language to reach multilingual competence, which should be achieved taking into account the special needs of the students, who learn by playing and moving around because of their age, so interactive teaching is

a must. The text also promotes the usage of digital tools in order to improve both comprehension and expression, highlighting the possibility of using authentic materials, communicating with international peer students and co-working in international projects.

The objectives applied to Foreign Language teaching in the Decree include written expression using templates, reading comprehension and IT usage to obtain information and communicate using FL.

Foreign Languages contents include reading really basic words and sentences, writing basic vocabulary and really basic sentences, using educational software to read and write basic messages, and progressive using new technologies to learn and process language teaching.

Foreign Language Assessment Criteria includes reading and identifying already known basic words and sentences, and writing already known words and expression with the help of templates usage.

6.4 Implanting Americanized schools in Valencia: Nelson vs. ASV

After developing a view on generic features regarding bilingual educational legal frameworks both in the United States of America and in Spain, the next step is to specifically compare two schools to pinpoint the data showcasing examples trying to prove the feasibility of exporting models.

The school representing the American bilingual education model would be Nelson Elementary School. Personally, I worked longer for Walker Elementary School than I did for

Nelson, but I preferred the latter since Walker Elementary School has been experiencing a removal of the bilingual program from the building, dismantling the program one grade per year, turning into a monolingual school. This situation occurs often in USA since programs move in and out of buildings rather than facing their extinction.

During my time at Walker, I taught first grade bilingual in my very first year as visiting teacher and, the following year, I moved up to third grade bilingual but, due to the program being moved out of the building and, according to the seniority rule that states that those teachers with longer service in the school district get prioritized over teachers with shorter service in case of a shortage in job positions, I got surplus status and, being an untenured teacher, I was forced to change buildings.

By the time I arrived at Nelson Elementary School, I was much more knowledgeable than I was in my first years at Walker, and that helped me out blending in the system to accomplish a much better experiencing of being a bilingual teacher in USA. That is why I felt best to use Nelson Elementary School as the school of reference when dealing with American bilingual education.

Nelson Elementary School has recently celebrated being running over a century and, originally, it was built thanks to the funding provided by John Nelson, being consequently named after him. Nelson Elementary School was built in 1908 although it got additions both in 1950 and 1969. Now, according to the 2009 Interactive Illinois Report Card, it includes sixteen classrooms for five hundred and nine students attending Monday to Friday from eight in the morning until two in the afternoon.

A prior Nelson school was built in 1881 in 9th Street but it got destroyed because of a fire so it was rebuilt in 1908 in what now is the current Nelson Elementary School in 15th Street, and it is part of the forty-seven schools in the 205 School District in Rockford, located in Winnebago County, being part of the state of Illinois, USA.

John Nelson was born in 1830 in Westergoland, Sweden. He came to America in the 50s and he ended up settling in Illinois where he founded Nelson Knitting Company, after inventing the Nelson Knitting Machine, made for better knitting socks. The company meant a breakthrough in the socks market and Nelson got known worldwide.

The symbol of the Rockford based knitting company, the Sock Monkey, popularized itself enormously and today, it can be found in every state in USA but it is especially in its hometown of Rockford where he is all around. These lovable monkeys made out of Nelson socks, have varied from the original version, reflecting top notch creativity from different artists who saw in the Sock Monkeys a perfect item to showcase their skills on. A six feet tall sock monkey can be found in the Nelson Elementary School library to honor John Nelson for being the school founder. This specific monkey was created by Mrs. Painter, the current Arts teacher at Nelson Elementary School, who I had the honor of working with.

The school includes from Kindergarten to fifth grade both in monolingual and bilingual programs and, for every bilingual classroom, there used to be two monolingual classrooms but now the proportion is balanced, having the same amount of monolingual and bilingual classrooms. The bilingual program implemented is the transitional bilingual program, being the bilingual classroom a place where bilingual students stay until they are ready to be transitioned out into monolingual classrooms, once their English is good enough.

In 2009, Nelson Elementary School failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress although it was reading what dragged them down since the school met or exceeded benchmarks in Math. The school did not make AYP, scoring an all-together percentage of 61.9 of the school students either meeting or exceeding the given benchmarks in all subjects in the ISAT testing, experiencing a lowering which is especially noticeable when we look at third grade, since Nelson third graders scored an average of around forty percent of the students meeting or exceeding the given benchmarks in all subjects while the average for third graders in the school district was around sixty percent, and for third graders statewide was around seventy percent.

This is even more worrying when we study the trend and we check how by 2007, Nelson third graders scored sixty percent of the students meeting or exceeding the given benchmarks in all subjects. A lowering of a total twenty percent average for third graders in ISAT results in a two years span is shocking. This fact, added to the school being already one year in school improvement status, makes it ultimately decisive to overcome the situation in 2010 after one warning year, to finally make AYP.

In order for a school to make Adequate Yearly Progress, it needs to meet or exceed specific benchmarks when ranking at state standardized tests under the "No Child Left Behind" law passed under the administration of G. W. Bush. The school has to score a minimum average of seventy percent in both Reading and Math, meeting a minimum of ninety-five percent participation on state assessments, and a ninety percent attendance rate for Elementary and Middle Schools.

Nelson Elementary School is now in Academic Early Warning Status by the state of Illinois. AEWS includes schools which did not make Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years and now are eligible for state sanctions. If a school, after not making AYP for

two consecutive years is placed under AEWS and does not make AYP for two more years, it enters Academic Watch Status, being eligible for additional state sanctions.

Even though RPS includes forty-seven schools, only forty-three of them rank in the Illinois Standards Achievement Test. Out of those forty-three schools, only ten (Thompson Elementary School, Brookview Elementary School, Cherry Valley Elementary School, Clifford Carlson Elementary School, Gregory Elementary School, Johnson Elementary School, Milford Elementary School, Rolling Green, Spring creek Elementary School and Washington Gifted School) ranked over the required minimum average of seventy percent putting together Reading and Math, including the phenomenal Washington Gifted School, which ranked 99.8 percent. Eighteen out of the failing schools are in AWS status already, twelve are AWES and only four of the failing schools (Bloom Elementary School, Haskell Academy, Montessori Elementary School and Welsh Elementary School) are not in AWES or AWS status.

The Illinois Standards Achievement Test used to compile all this data is a standardized test covering reading and mathematics from third grade to eighth grade, science in fourth and seventh grade and writing in third, fifth, sixth, eighth and eleventh grade. It tries to emerge as a reliable measure of student learning which could be comparable year after year, numeric performance levels indicating progress towards meeting the Illinois Learning Standards.

From 2006, ACCESS tests are also being administered for English Language Learners, measuring their English language proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening for students whose first language is not English. This test, although being standardized, allows different tiers to be administered according to the expectations teachers have on the performance capabilities of each student, and it is a good tool to discuss the best moment to transition students out of the bilingual program and into monolingual mainstream classes, depending on how high the students score.

ACCESS scores let students rank in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. According to how they performed, scores place students in different categories for each skill, stating their specific proficiency level: Entering, Beginning, Developing, Expanding, Bridging and Reaching.

In Nelson Elementary School, by 2009, most of the students in Kindergarten were placed by their scores in the Entering proficiency level in every skill. Most first graders were placed in the Developing proficiency level at Listening, in the Entering proficiency level at both Speaking and Reading and in the Beginning proficiency level at Writing. Most second graders were placed in the Expanding proficiency level at both Listening and Reading, in the Reaching proficiency level at Speaking and in the Beginning proficiency level at Writing. Most third graders were placed in the Bridging proficiency level at both Listening and Reading, in the Beginning proficiency level at Speaking and in the Developing proficiency level at Writing. Most fourth graders were placed in the Bridging proficiency level at Listening, in the Entering proficiency level at Speaking, and in the Developing proficiency level at both Reading and Writing. Most fifth graders were placed in the Bridging proficiency level at both Listening and Reading, in the Expanding proficiency level at Speaking and in the Developing proficiency level at Writing.

There are some explanations related to the variations observed in the rankings scored after ACCESS tests. Results go back and forth because more than one grade level takes the very same test. Kindergarteners take the Kindergarten level ACCESS tests but both first and second graders take the very same test, which is the cluster 1-2 ACCESS test. Third, fourth and fifth graders take the very same test again, which is the cluster 3-5 ACCESS test.

Thus, students should score higher by second grade than what they should score by third grade, because by second grade, that student is taking a test which was already taken and which embraces a lower level than the level that student would be at.

By third grade, that very same student would face a different test which, on top of that, is made to be also taken by two grade levels over the grade level that student would be at.

Consequently, fourth graders score lower than third graders because of the characteristics of the ACCESS testing system itself.

We also have to take into account that most of those students who already scored in the Reaching proficiency level, were probably transitioned out of the bilingual program and they were not to take the test again, so a lowering in the scores as we look at higher grade levels responds to the students in those grade levels still in the bilingual program, because of their lack of proficiency regarding English language, which is the measured item ACCESS is precisely made for.

Curriculum followed statewide is applied both to monolingual and bilingual classrooms. General curriculum is made up with the Illinois Learning Standards, divided into grade levels. In order for the Curriculum to be easier to follow and apply in the lesson plans, the Illinois Learning Standards are usually summed up into what are called Power Standards. These are a compendium of blended learning standards from the official curriculum, coded and divided into grade levels without addressing monolingual and bilingual classrooms separately. Power Standards are the goals to be achieved by students at the end of the academic year and every activity which happens to take place at school should be listed in lesson plan form and oriented towards the process of accomplishing a goal which would ultimately be one of the Power Standards.

Power Standards in Illinois are divided into subjects. Language Arts, Social Studies, P.E., Arts and Music have their own Power Standards for every grade level. Math and Science, on the other hand, share some Power Standards. K-8 Power Standards are pretty unified while from ninth grade on, they scatter into different and more specific categories.

According to the 2009 Interactive Illinois Report Card, Nelson Elementary is schooling a 56.6 percentage of Hispanics as opposed to a 21.4 percentage of Caucasian students and a 12.6 percentage of African-Americans, being these the three biggest chunks when looking at the ethnicity groups the students of the school are divided into.

The ethnicity percentages multiply their importance and especially their relevance in this research work as we check the historical, as by 1999 Nelson Elementary School enrollment was divided into a 60.3 percent Caucasian students, 24.3 percent African-American and a mere 13.4 percent Hispanics. Thus, in the last ten years, Caucasian students at Nelson have gone down to a third of what they were, African-American students have reduced to a half of what they were and Hispanics are now over four times what they were. This tells you how big the increasing migration of Hispanics into USA has grown into.

It is equally interesting looking at ethnicity rates regarding teaching staff at Nelson because, surprisingly enough, they do not follow suit with the ethnicity rates of the students in the School District, creating an unbalance or mismatch between both groups and their current inadequate proportion.

From 1999 to 2009, ethnicity in the teaching staff has not changed as dramatically as it did when we looked at students. Caucasian teachers have only been reduced from 89.3 percent to

87.8, African-American teachers have not moved from their five percent and Hispanic teachers have only risen from 3.9 per cent into the current 5.9 per cent.

Such a mismatch seems totally unreasonable. From 1999 to 2009 trend is Hispanic students have quadrupled while Hispanic teachers did not even doubled. African-American students reduced by one half while African-American teachers remained the same. Caucasian students reduced by two thirds while Caucasian teachers remained nearly the same. Plain and simple, those are some numbers to look at by the administrators at the 205 School District in Rockford, Illinois.

District and Statewide, percentages are much smoother but always following the same trend. In the 205 School District, from 1999 to 2009, Caucasian students have lowered from an original 55.2 percent to 38 percent, African-American students have frozen at 29 percent and Hispanic students have increased from 11.8 percent to 22.8 percent.

In the whole state of Illinois, Caucasian students have lowered from an original 62 percent to 53.3 percent, African-American students have slightly lowered from 20.8 percent to 19.1 percent and Hispanic students have increased from 13.9 percent to 20.8 percent.

Ethnicity in the teaching staff both District and Statewide is also smoother than the numbers seen at Nelson Elementary School. In the District, from 1999 to 2009, Caucasian teachers lowered from 89.3 percent to 87.8 percent, African-American teachers remained in their 5 percent and Hispanic teachers increased from 3.7 percent into 5.9 percent.

Statewide, Caucasian teachers shockingly increased from 84.9 percent to 85.1 percent, African-American teachers lowered from 11 percent to 8.3 percent and Hispanic teachers increased from 3.3 to 5 percent.

Even being nearly as dramatic as they were when we look at Nelson Elementary School, numbers are interesting enough when we prove that nowadays there are less Caucasian students enrolled in schools in Illinois but, instead of experiencing a sub-consequent shortage in Caucasian teachers, Illinois is employing even more Caucasian teachers than before.

Statewide, African-American students remained the same but African-American teachers in the state went down from 11 to 8 percent. Hispanic teachers are only a 5 percent of the teaching staff community in Illinois where over 20 percent of the students are Hispanic, plus in the 205 School District Hispanic students represent 22.8 percent and in Nelson, they represent a quite ridiculous 56.6 percent out of its total enrollment.

The American School of Valencia, with its facilities being located close to Puçol, outside Valencia, is an international, private, bilingual, university preparatory school, as they label themselves. ASV is a perfect ambassador of the American bilingual education system in Spain since it is the school I found less different from what it would be experiencing bilingual education on US soil.

Along with the arrival of Ford, the American company, to Valencia, came American and British workers who wanted their children to be schooled according to their specific needs so the Anglo-American School of Valencia was created. Many children from Valencia enrolled in the Anglo-American School, keeping it alive after the foreign families returned to their hometowns.

Thus, Spanish-English bilingual school continued in what then was called Colegio Hispano Norteamericano to later develop into the American School of Valencia.

ASV schools from Preschool up to twelfth grade, with an estimated population of over seven hundred students, being most of them Spanish although the ethnicity of ASV also includes few students from other nationalities and cultures. An estimated ten percent of the students enrolled at ASV are not Spanish. Their ethnicity is diverse since there are students from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, South Africa, United Arabs Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Its curriculum is aimed at providing students with the necessary skills to continue their studies in Spanish, European or American Universities, granting the international spirit of the institution from its foundation.

ASV is accredited by the middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and is fully recognized by the Spanish Ministry of Education, qualifying graduates for entering international Universities.

From the bilingual point of view, ASV states as part of its mission to teach students how to use English and Spanish appropriately, making ASV eligible for this research work in an attempt to point out differences between American bilingual education on US soil and American bilingual education in Valencia.

The first difference is based on the formation of the Board. Whereas American School Boards are represented by elected important community people, ASV uses a different system

without election. ASV Board members are parents of students registered at ASV, handling different areas according to their professional profiles outside the school to better match their ASV representative duties.

ASV runs as a limited liability corporation and the parents are to hold a share of the company in order to register students. This shareholding creates a new administration related institution through Shareholders General Meetings, capable of approving the management of the administration very much as an American School Board would. The uncommon finance and administration system running at ASV facilitates parent not only to buy into administration but also to be really involved in the educational process students are experiencing. Once a student exits ASV, the share held by the parents is transferred to the parents of a new member at the school in a never-ending cycle.

Ethnicity of the students is dramatically different when we compare average American schools with ASV, which is obvious by looking at ethnicity rates and demography of USA as opposed to Spain. Taking the Illinois state average ethnicity rates regarding students, we saw how Caucasian students rated at 53.3 percent, African-American students were at 19.1 percent and Hispanic students represented 20.8 percent of the enrolled students, whereas ASV declares ninety percent of its enrolled students being Spanish as the only big chunk in ethnic groups at the school, having the remaining ten percent cut split into twenty-five countries of origin.

Curriculum-wise, there are many differences because of the nature of ASV objectives being to catapult students into either Spanish or International Universities, being the ambitioned content wider to cover than the general curriculum in American schools. ASV states that enrolled students receive an American College-preparatory curriculum that combines at the higher grades with Spanish curriculum to prepare students for the Spanish Universities admission exams,

claiming English being the principal language of instruction and having high school students prepare for SAT exams.

ASV claims accomplishing a perfect success rate regarding students passing PAU exams of one hundred percent, surpassing the national average, which support the view of bilingualism not only not being misleading for students but being highly beneficial for them.

Because of the combined curriculum ASV utilizes, academic itineraries vary from American schools. From seventh to tenth grade, ASV students are to take some compulsory core subjects but they would complete the remaining subjects after choosing the Spanish National program or the foreign national program itinerary, with its own subjects plus a corpus of elective subjects.

Eleventh and twelfth grades are a comprehensive two-year program preparing students for University, so eleventh and twelfth graders are to elect a program of study from Social Sciences, Health Sciences or Technological Sciences, added to the compulsory core subjects chosen by ASV for students to become well-rounded. In addition to selecting one of the three programs of studies, students must decide whether to participate in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, the Spanish National Program or a combination of both.

IB students are required to study both the humanities and the sciences, having to elect one subject from each of the following groups: Language, Second Language, Individuals and Societies, Experimental Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Science, Arts. Three or four of these elected subjects are to be studied at Higher Level, being the remaining subjects studied at Standard Level. Thus, students are able to explore some subjects in depth and others more broadly, meaning early specialization.

Higher Level courses represent a recommended minimum of two hundred and forty teaching hours, whereas Standard Level courses represent a recommended minimum of one hundred and fifty hours.

Undeniably, there are certain similarities worth mentioning. ASV runs a transportation system similar to American schools, based on school buses with different routes, enabling feasible and safe transportation for every student within no more than one hour trips. ASV handles fifteen routes covering most of Valencia and some towns in Castellon and Alicante, with students in every bus supervised by bus monitors.

The Head of School Services is ultimately responsible for the overall transportation process at ASV. The only difference regarding American schools is that buses are not owned or regulated by any School District, they are regular buses which ASV charters for students to and from school.

The existence of the nurse office is other shared featured that ASV has respected from American schools. ASV nurse is in attending full time, providing medical care for students, contacting parents about medical issues, implementing Generalitat Valenciana health programs such as vaccination or dental health and acknowledging teaching staff on first-aid and health related matters.

American schools offer medical assistance throughout nurse offices but it is quite common for them to share buildings, meaning they are not all day in one school but rather half day in one school and half day in a different school. ASV would not only meet that service but

surpass on it by granting the attending of the nurse at any given time. Implementing health programs is also achieved in ASV as much as it is on American schools where you can easily find flu shot or dental campaigns.

Food service is also quite similar both for American schools and ASV in terms of lunch room, service and supervising staff. In fact, it is so similar that you might find the very same implementations since ASV worries about teaching good table manners to students and eating habits, considering it part of the overall education of ASV students and Nelson Elementary School is currently implementing what they call “The manners program”, being it an annual program designed to teach manners for students to use at school, at home and within the community, with a Manners Dinner being held each year, where students and staff dress up for a sit down meal.

Assessment is somehow similar to American schools at American School of Valencia since it issues both Report cards and Progress reports or mid-terms. American School of Valencia only issues Progress reports in subjects where the student is receiving an unsatisfactory grade, meaning a grade below seventy percent. American schools generally issue both Report cards and Progress Reports with disregard of subjects being passed or not.

The American grading system, ranking from A to F, being A excellent, B very Good, C average, D below average and F failing, is utilized by ASV at every grade level while American Schools only use it in the upper grade levels. Bilingual Elementary Schools in USA do not use the unified American grading system utilized in Middle and High School. ASV, like American High Schools do, uses Grade Point Average from ninth grade up until twelfth grade, calculated at the end of each marking period from grades earned at ASV, turning the American grading system into percentages and then, calculating GPA from those percentages without including them in the transcripts of the students.

Even though most of the after-school program activities offered by ASV are not based on academic tutoring but rather sports, it is quite common for American schools to equally run after-school programs or even voluntary tutoring classes on Saturdays. Summer school is another shared feature ASV has in common with most American schools, with lots of outdoor activities and, in the case of ASV, special focus on English learning activities, unlike what would be found in American schools since summer school programs do not prioritize ELLs yet but rather students performing below expected benchmarks at school. ASV also offers on demand individual tutoring sessions for students who struggle in certain content areas. This tutoring is made possible thanks to alumni volunteering to do so.

ASV contacts parents or legal guardians every other week through newsletters, informing about events, activities, procedures or policies at school very much like happens in most American schools where newsletters are frequently sent home in a monthly basis. There even is a TV screen in the ASV front entrance resembling billboards shown at American school entrances, announcing monthly events at the building.

ASV runs what they call FAST program, standing for Family and School Together. FAST program works as a mixture of liaison and PTO functionalities, improving communication between the school and the families and feeding the community feeling due to family participation in the school.

Parent Delegates functions resembling PTOs in American schools, attending meetings with the principal, bridging the gap between the rest of the parents and the group made by administrators and faculty staff. The only function American PTOs have over ASV Parent Delegates is the fund-raising.

After analyzing the resulting data from the comparison of Nelson Elementary School and the American School of Valencia, a survey was made in order for relevant representing people from both schools to add an external view on the matter. The survey was made according to the most relevant similarities and differences found after comparing both schools, in an attempt of having them highlighted or modified by responsible professionals who have liabilities on them.

Paul Yankee is the former Director of the Bilingual Services Department at Rockford School District, experienced in heading and representing one hundred and seventeen teachers serving approximately two thousand three hundred students fifteen different schools in Rockford. The goal of the Bilingual Department is for all LEP students to learn English. However, the student´s native language is used in order to access academic content while in the process of acquiring English. Consequently, skills learned in the first language can be transferred to the second. As a student becomes more proficient in English, the amount of content instruction in English is increased.

The Bilingual Department welcomes bilingual students into the district, believing they are an asset to the educational system by bringing cultural and linguistic diversity, which can enrich both the classrooms and the school system.

Julianne Stall is the former Pre-school and Elementary Principal at the American School of Valencia, having second to none information on the characteristics of the bilingual education running at K-5, which is the cluster of grade levels to be compared with Nelson Elementary School. This made her a primary target, along with Paul Yankee, regarding this research work in terms of survey filling to better implement my research and previous conjectures on the matter.

After interviewing Paul Yankee, he reveals how punishing measures under NCLB for schools repeatedly not making Adequate Yearly Progress, have also safety checkpoints to release some pressure from them, based on solid but insufficient improvement made by these schools.

Paul Yankee shows himself in favor of NCLB law being implemented based on the theory behind it, the spirit of accountability accepted by the schools when it comes to committing to results being worked upon, but he considers its mid-term demands regarding school achievement unrealistic, blaming low academic achievement on economic status of the families the students are growing surrounded by.

Standardized testing is not something clearly defended by Mr. Yankee, who expresses his doubts on its validity when applied to every student without exception of English language proficiency. Case in point: the Illinois Standardized Assessment Tests.

His reasoning based on ethnicity ratio mismatches when dealing with both teachers and students, and specially Hispanics and Caucasians by being the two major ethnic groups teaming as part of the educational community, failed at meeting my expectations of a clear and resolute explanation.

After interviewing Julianne Stall, she declared how she was not in favor of NCLB, because of the way it stresses testing and results.

The very same way Paul Yankee admitted low-income economic status of families to be blamed on low academic achievement in public schools, Julianne Stall admits the student profile

regarding the private school she works at, which has proven to provide families with high academic achievement, is a student from an affluent family.

When asked about proposition 227, she proved being against current policies in the United States of America regarding education, because undermining second languages with such a huge population of people using them because of their origins, does not seem logical.

Julianne Stall does not depict either American or Spanish bilingual education situations as models to be followed right now, although she recognizes Spain is working in the right direction.

7. PRESENT SITUATION OF IT APPLIED LEARNING

Past educators already foresaw the potential of new technologies being used for instructional purposes. At the time, researchers could not pinpoint the materials that would be utilized since some of them could have not been invented yet.

Even though certain technologies, which were believed to be eligible for a future implementation regarding teaching, ended up outdated and obsolete, some others which were yet to appear did replace them, bringing big improvements while doing so.

Some technologies being implemented nowadays for educational purposes have existed for a long time, and their instructional possibilities came to a reality through time as researchers thought they would. An example of this is the usage of television contents, which has met the expectations it arouse in the past in the views of researchers, without being outdated and replaced to this day.

> Language laboratories, film strips, television programs, overhead or opaque projectors, films, and other machines our technological age will devise could, of course, vitalize teaching.
>
> Finocchiaro (1983: 182)

Because of involving both visual and auditory activities, television and movies are far from detrimental when applied to language teaching, according to Willis (1990: 82). They pair up perfectly with a communicative approach, studying interacting situations which, although

artificial, mimic real life communicative scenarios, being a perfect tool to work on communicative skills in general, and communicative competence in particular.

New technologies have found many barriers preventing them from being implemented in the field of education as it would have been desirable.

The educative community has recognized its incapability of implementing IT applied instruction for a long time, mainly due to the lack of readiness which was surpassed by the rapid appearance and evolution of computing. This unstoppable flood of technological advances clearly outpaced the capability of the educative system to apply them.

Thus, for a long time, educators have been nowhere close from deciphering the best way of implementing IT usage in the classroom or integrating new technologies in the teaching process.

"It is safe to say that nobody yet understands what electronics has to do with education" is a quote from Celce-Murcia (1979: 38) which certainly expresses how educators felt like shooting in the dark when implementing IT at school not so long ago.

Even if the path to be followed looked blurry, the arrival of computer assisted teaching seemed undeniable to Obrist (1985: 14). To clarify on that, we only have to take a look at the evolution of the ratio regarding numbers of students and computers, which has improved dramatically over the years.

> In 1981 there were, on average, 125 students per computer in the United States. In 1991, there were 18 students per computer, so it is safe to state that the school use of computers has spread deeply.
>
> U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment (1995: 148)

The acceptability related to the usage of computers in academic scenarios is not a recent situation. Computing and its possible interrelation with education, feeding off each other, is an idea that has always been taken into consideration. In fact, Fries (1962: 83) dates the first proposals of using computers to translate scientific reports back to 1949.

It also proves to be resilient since academic computer usage has kept being implemented through time, as nowadays computers are not alienated from classrooms. Nowadays, computers are being made room in class, aiming at an individualized usage achieved by the 1:1 ratio whenever possible, but few years ago computerized teaching technologies were confined in laboratories, as explained by Posteguillo (2001: 159) "most colleges and high schools have language laboratories and their instructing role has become accessory¨.

Resources are vital when implementing IT applied teaching in class, since they dictate to what extent the inclusion of new technologies is feasible.

The same way tools define the product we can create by giving us a limited number of possibilities, technological resources shape the boundaries of computing implementation in teaching.

> The absence of certain resources will place serious limitations on what the teacher can achieve. An awareness of what resources are available is necessary from the beginning of a teaching operation. Resources are not an adjunct, but an integral part of the learning situation. Their availability offers opportunities to the teacher. The lack of them imposes restrictions which may mean that his pupils cannot be set the objectives that he would like them to reach and cannot be taught by the methods that would otherwise be the most suitable.
>
> Wilkins (1974: 47)

Ironically enough, educators do not take part in the development of new technologies, but rather try to take profit from the computing devices they are given.

Instead of just attempting to maximize the possibilities of a device engineered for general purposes, the teaching community could address the creative root demanding for the technology it feels could benefit students the most, and ask for it to be tailored for educational purposes before being created.

If the technological inventions are to be effective in the area of education, the attitudes of both the population at large and the professionals employed in the sector must change.

Educators are to be trained in teaching oriented computing, because it is their responsibility to maximize the possibilities this offers to complement traditional teaching. Without proper training, computing would be undermined in education, and evolution would be slowed considerably.

> Today, education at every level must make a significant contribution to ensuring that the best possible use is made of the opportunities and prospects offered by technological developments in the various spheres of life and at the same time minimize the risk of potentially undesirable developments. To achieve this purpose, it is certainly necessary - but by no means sufficient - to increase the scientific and technical knowledge and skill content of all educational courses.
>
> Hameyer (1989: 24)

The idea of new technologies meaning a potential improvement for educational purposes is not new. It has always been considered a matter of quality over quantity regarding the implementation of computing in education, since the goal is not to teach more but to teach better, as stated by Apter (1976: 8) "nowadays, educational technology is being developed not only to make education affordable, but also to improve its quality ".

The forecast about the arrival of computing to daily school instruction has traditionally been surpassed by the expectations of this really happening.

This has been a reality up until now, when finally expectations and forecast meet in the middle, partly due to the successful experiments IT applied teaching has undergone. Innovative computing implementation teaching programs have been, and still are being, successfully developed by different organizations.

The information these past and ongoing applications provide us with is essential to step towards a real computing update of teaching, knowing that positive results have already been the outcome.

Expectation has always been high, but the fear of applying experimental tools to real life instruction is constantly dimming away as successful experiences continue to be documented. This way, expectations are more likely to be met because of not holding back when experiencing with IT applied teaching, so forecasts are more realistic, using technological revolution for an education revolution, in order to encourage and promote personal and social fulfillment.

7.1 Origins

Taking into account that the first computers, dating back almost fifty years, were humongous and almost having no processing power at all, it seems feasible to understand how nowadays, with the existence of computers being extremely cheaper, smaller, lighter, more portable and obviously more powerful, it is the time to benefit from that making new uses of them in education, as other fields are already doing.

Both Sharp (1996: 19) and Reparaz (1992: 33) explain how the world's first electronic digital computer, the Electronic Numerical Integrator and Calculator (ENIAC) was turned on for the first time in 1946 by the University of Pennsylvania, being utilized for scientific and military purposes. The ENIAC weighed as much as thirty tons, it was thirty meters long, three meters high and needed a whole building for itself to be contained, whereas its computing power would nowadays be equivalent to that of a singing greeting card.

Ironically enough, the appearance of the first computers, even being massive in size and weight, and almost depreciable in processing power, created far more euphoria back fifty years ago that current machines are creating now.

> The technological advances of the 1940´s simply reinforced the general euphoria. Computers were on the horizon, and their imminent availability reinforced the belief that it would suffice to gain a theoretical understanding of only the simplest and most superficially obvious of phenomena – everything else would merely prove to be more of the same, an apparent complexity that would be disentangled by the electronic marvels.
>
> Chomsky (1968: 3)

Chomsky agreed (1968: 4) with the achievements of the educational implementation of IT being deceptive, adding how the considerable amount of both time, energy and money invested for that purpose had not granted linguists with many groundbreaking findings in that specific field.

What is shared by both then and now is the fact of euphoria surpassing real expectations, since criticism seems to continuously tag along the implementation of computers for educational purposes.

The interconnection between different fields is beneficial for every part involved. In certain occasions, invention aiming at one specific goal ended up being reutilized and converted by a different field which turned out to be a better recipient of it.

This was the case of the Internet, probably one of the most life-changing inventions of the twentieth century, which began back in 1969 as a military project of the US Government's Department of Defense to create a channel of communication which would bypass the difficulties accompanying a potential nuclear attack, as stated by Levy (1997: 31).

Nowadays, the use made of the Internet differs greatly from that of enabling communication in war times, and never would education have taken profit from it if the tool had not been converted by different fields, tailoring it to better fit the demands of a wide variety of interests.

The idea of promoting the usage of IT applied communicative multimedia language instruction is not as recent as it could seem, since it has been thirty years from the moment MIT began researching about it.

Levy (1997: 26) also explains how in 1983, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) established Project Athena as an eight-year research program to explore innovative uses of the computer in education.

One focus of the project was to create an experimental system for building multimedia learning environments. Within this framework is the Athena Language Learning Project (ALLP), whose aim is the creation of communication-based prototypes for beginning and intermediate courses in French, German, Spanish, Russian, and English as a Second Language. The Athena Language Learning Project (ALLP) was conceived within the communicative approach to language teaching.

It soon, along with great funds, flourished from an experiment into a campus network of interconnected workstations, representing the accomplishment of a new way of implementing computing regarding language learning. In fact, project Athena began in 1983 at MIT with initial funding of $50 million dollars from Digital Equipment Corporation and IBM with the aim of

exploring innovative uses of the computer in education. As of 1988, MIT had 450 computer workstations, interconnected using a campus-wide network, on various sites around the institute.

Even older is the so called St. Cloud Method, which bearing the same new technology and multimedia language teaching premises, started sixty years ago in France.

It is not as communicative or computerized as the project led by MIT thirty years later, and it was more elementary oriented instead of appealing to college students, but the use of multimedia new technologies for language teaching was considered successful. In it, students were to watch film strips and work on the picture chorally.

According to Celce-Murcia (1979: 27), the St. Cloud method first appeared in 1951 at a teacher training college in St. Cloud, France. It is a carefully structured course in which students are immersed in multi-media language presentations. Film strips are the dominant medium since initially students watch a picture sequence, then repeat the material chorally, not seeing the written language until after sixty hours of instruction.

St. Cloud appears to be most successful during the earlier stages and most appreciated by non-native teachers who are not completely secure in the language they are teaching. It produces better phonological than communicative competence, and it has proven more satisfactory with younger students than with those of college age.

Classrooms have inexorably changed at the same pace new technologies have, turning into more comfortable and colorful spaces, embracing the disposition of different computing gadgets around the room to be utilized at any given time.

Out of every skilled trained at school, reading and writing are the ones that better profit from these new devices, and because of the individualized nature of them, IT implemented reading and writing activities in reduced groups can be developed in learning stations by applying guided reading techniques.

In the United States, the bare-plastered elementary school classroom with rows of desks, hard chairs, and a picture of George Washington at the front, has in many instances been transformed into a comfortable and colorful multi-purpose room, with areas set aside for special subject materials, and with a variety of audio and visual materials available through which students can experience many models of learning.

Celce-Murcia (1979: 39) highlights how reading and writing benefit the most from every content area when applying multimedia technologies to instruction by noticing how "although audio cassettes, individual filmstrip viewers, language masters, film cassette projectors, and video apparatus are all commonly found these days, frequently in the same classroom, the areas of reading, writing and language arts seem to be the most dependent on the use of media".

The high expectations placed on the implementation of computers in education were rapid, but to this day they are still to be met. However, it is true that nowadays, both terms are closer than they have ever been.

> Placing computers and their capability of processing information in the hands of both teachers and students, the possibility of initiating a revolution in education similar what the utilization of printed books at school meant appears.
>
> Apter (1976: 58)

The development of language laboratories peaked right after the Sputnik I was launched in 1957, since it deeply impacted and worried the United States of America, by considering it a detriment of the American space technology.

In 1958 the National Defense Act was passed in USA, and it meant an increased attention to education. A language learning program was established, and as a consequence of it, the number of language laboratories arose, going from 300 in 1957 up to 3,000 in 1961.

Even though the first language laboratories appeared in the United States, they were also utilized in the United Kingdom back in the fifties and sixties, as noted by Posteguillo (2001: 159). In fact, Lamb (1967: 89) explains how the very first language laboratory to be incorporated to the British national education did so in 1961, promoted by the Educational Foundation for Visual Aids and installed in the Ealing Technical College.

Later on, after achieving certain recognition for proving useful when learning foreign languages, they finally decayed in the eighties. Considering Estarellas (1971: 201), the language laboratory has changed language teaching, but it has not changed the basic organization or the lesson planning of departments, which should evolve following the new developmental framework brought by technologic instruction.

Spain is undergoing the first steps regarding the integration of new technologies in the educational process, and it is doing so in a slow but steady manner. Digitalization of schools is being budgeted nationwide but this is not best profitable on its own since technology renewals

are linked to teaching renewals including adapting the role of teachers, the learning process, tutoring, classroom management or activity use.

> The Atenea Project, a statewide plan for IT implementation in Spanish schools, focused on providing institutions depending on the ministry of education with the necessary computing resources in order to adequate Spanish schools to the rest of the European schools. To do so, the ministry of education budgeted 6,500 million pesetas for a five years period, from 1985 to 1989, directed to acquiring hardware, training educators and developing teaching programs.
>
> Reparaz (1992: 33)

The adventurous spirit of language teaching, which has always tried to reinvent itself by making use of new inventions through time, would certainly find a way of maximizing the benefits brought along by the new computing wave.

Language teaching is known for traditionally pioneering in the use of multimedia, as it has integrated audio recordings for a better development of the listening comprehension on the students, and video recordings, by the 1980s, adding gestures and captions to the audio, which are still utilized nowadays.

7.2 Barriers

Undeniably, the implementation of computers in the field of education helps overcome many difficulties, representing barriers which prevent some people from having an access to education.

These barriers are varied, but probably two of the most recognizable ones are those related to space and time.

By using computers and the Internet as instructing tools, students who live far away from the school they enrolled, along with people who have reduced mobility due to severe handicaps, or even situations of severe weather making it impossible for the students to commute, could be solved.

In fact, taking Castillejo (1986: 111), it could be stated that it has been in the field of remote teaching where technological plans have been most strictly applied when designing instructive materials.

Some regions have a really sparse population, with few densely populated areas which are not easily accessible, or road conditions which are far from optimum. Countless students, despite living in more concentrated areas of population, are unable to move because of physical problems. Here, a carefully studied implementation of new technologies for educational purposes could bring instruction to the homes of the students via Internet, and utilizing the same channel could students transmit their doubts or send their work to their teachers.

In other cases, difficulties derive from time constraints, since specific instructing timetables could not match the schedule of students. This could be the case of some vocational education students, who work for a living and have a limited number of hours off duty which they want to utilize for instruction. New technologies offer these students the possibility of having access to instruction via Internet at any time, and communicate back also at the desired

times. Even students with different schedules could enroll in digitalized courses because, by the computerized nature of them, teachers publish contents which are accessible and contestable at any time making use of virtual instruction.

According to the U.S. Office of Technology Assessment, Information Technology is a tool that can remove the barriers posed by distance and time, having computers eased education by providing students with powerful tools to overcome specific individual difficulties academic-wise.

Computing is not to be seen as a segregator but a unifier instead, since it facilitates people with special needs valid answers for their barriers to be overcome, enabling them to turn exclusion into inclusion. In case of pupils with serious handicaps, computers offer the only possibility of access to information and to communication and consequently are an important and direct form of social integration.

Handicapped students should be given the possibility of handling the same innovative programs created to be used along with new technological devices. In case instruction is not possible in the same terms, these students should be brought aboard by making use of special accessories that make equity possible in the learning group, instead of neglecting them from enjoying the advances by replacing the software they utilize, which constitutes a negative discrimination.

If we build special software adapted to the disability of pupils, we create a segregating situation, being it not the best way to implement truly integrative software.

The introduction of devices including touch screens is beneficial for students who experience difficulties using keyboards or even pen and paper. This is due to the intuitiveness of these screens, which naturalizes the interaction between a person and a computer by getting rid of accessorizing intermediary devices.

> The touch screen offers a real advantage to disabled students because it is a fast and natural way to enter data, to make selections, and to issue commands.
>
> Sharp (1996: 313)

When we talk about making multimedia training programs for the visually impaired, it is important to differentiate between degrees of accessibility.

A fully accessible product is one that is based on the needs and abilities of visually impaired people. All relevant information can be read in Braille and read out loud with synthesized or digital speech. The amount of information which is shown on the screen is limited, and no changes or updates occur by themselves. Videos, animations and other moving images should not be used unless they have a pedagogical purpose.

The keyboard or some other device with which people can easily control the computer are used for all commands. For example, some programs can use a touch screen or a concept keyboard if clear instructions are given about what to push in order to ask for additional information or to continue.

An informative and socially accessible program is one in which all relevant information can be obtained through Braille and/or speech. The program must be easy to control, for example

through an ordinary keyboard or a concept keyboard. To ensure that people can easily use screen-enlargement programs and other screen aids, the cursor should always be in the same row or in the same area as the relevant information. All changes on the screen can be described briefly so that the user understands that a change has occurred.

Since diagrams normally contain a great deal of data which are simultaneously available to the eye, it is not practical to simply convert diagrams into Braille or speech. Nevertheless, one should be able to request a description of the screen contents and have it either read out loud or in Braille.

Visually impaired people are capable of handling multimedia contents and, as explained by Coneo (2004: 149), should be targeted by multimedia programmers by aiming at stimulating the senses they use, providing them with information through touching and hearing, through Braille readable contents and speeches or noise.

Over the last few years, new technical aids for the blind have been developed, such as scanner-equipped reading systems, portable Braille terminals with electronic Braille display, speech synthesizers, numerical recorders and Braille displays with voice echo, becoming more useful, ergonomic and user-friendly. As a result, more information and documentation centers, libraries and associations have been equipped with them, democratizing their use.

In the near future, all visually handicapped students will have to use these tools on a personal or group basis, and social pressure will require them to be efficient and autonomous using these technologies at ever younger ages.

> For the last ten years, electronic Braille displays and speech synthesizers have been a part of special education programs, they have been improved to the point of becoming essential tools for accessing and working with data, and being integrated into the elementary education of visually handicapped students.
>
> Conneo (2004: 135)

Even though it is less critical when compared with physical barriers such as distance, time and obviously impairments, money is another barrier that could be overcome by bringing new technologies to the educational world.

An example of it would be the possibility for teachers to virtually attend international conferences and symposiums from home, via Internet, which represents at the same time a considerable cut in the expenses of a school and a great benefit for teachers to update themselves and research on how to improve their capabilities as educators, as noted by Burguer (1996: 4) when referring to how "new technologies bring worldwide conferences to teachers at no cost".

7.3 Training

The matter of grasping the full potential technology offers to educators depends on the ability of the user rather than depending on the capability of any given gadget. Thus, quoting Stevick (1982: 118), it could be said that the machine is only as good as the people who control it.

To have an inside look on how able teachers are to maximize the benefits of the educational implementation of new technologies, it is necessary to review what has been done in different parts of the world to collaborate with that idea.

In Germany, IT training courses were ambitioned so that knowledge in the matter could reflect back on education at any level, from elementary through further education.

In the long term, the Federal Republic of Germany aims to establish a system of interlocking, cumulative basic information technology courses covering the entire spectrum of education from schools right through further education. According to Hameyer (1989: 25), "these courses have to enable everyone to continuously broaden and deepen their basic information technology knowledge and skills, without losing their character of basic education for all people".

In Sweden, IT knowledge is instructed during the three senior years of compulsory school embedded in different subjects such as social science, natural science and mathematics, as noted by Hameyer (1989: 35). Even not being taught as a separate subject, or a specific training course, it is also valid and it represents a different model which is integrated.

Every Swedish student is supposed to, by the end of the schooling, be capable of correctly utilizing computers in daily life.

Hameyer (1989: 41) also explains how in France, in 1980, the aim was to install 10,000 microcomputers within the space of six years in all of the 1,200 lycées and, on an experimental basis, in several dozen vacational lycées and colleges. In 1983 the target was raised to 100,000 machines by 1988 in schools as a whole. In January 1985, the target was raised to 120,000

machines installed and 110,000 teachers trained by the end of the year. This was known as the "*informatique pour tous"* plan.

Teachers are also expected to be properly trained in the field of information technology in France, so teachers are eligible to attend a one-year training course in the matter. So, for the duration of the training course, being them primary or secondary school teachers, they are free from the instruction time at school so that they can dedicate themselves to learning, given that the knowledge acquired in the training course is going to revert on schools.

In the United States of America, surveys have found that most teachers felt like they were unprepared to implement computers into teaching. Among the interviewees who considered themselves ready to apply IT into their classes, there was a correlation between the training hours received and the confidence and willingness of implementing new technologies.

Obviously, the bigger number of hours of training received by teachers, the better knowledge and preparedness they embody and vice versa.

> By the late 1990s, the United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics surveyed teachers feelings of preparedness in many areas, including integrating educational technology into the grade or subject area they taught, reporting that only twenty percent of teachers felt very well prepared to integrate technology in their classroom, and only thirty-three percent of those teachers who had trained for more than eight hours of training in integrating technology into their own content areas reported that they felt very well prepared to use technology.
>
> Cumming (1999: 450)

At the same time American teachers declared their general incapability of applying new technologies into their daily teaching habits, a federal concern appeared on the matter, along with some organizations that were sensitized with the need of accrediting teachers, improving their technological capabilities and knowledge to tackle the problem of outdated instruction. One of these organizations is the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), as pointed out by Bertram (2003: 31).

Training teachers in general is vital for new technologies to provide communities with their full potential in terms of instruction capabilities, but Estarellas (1971: 245) highlights the importance of training language teachers in particular, stating that the very first improvement when educating teachers should see the light in the foreign languages department of any institution.

7.4 Multimedia

Whenever an innovation is applied to a certain field, as audiovisual material is being applied to education, the innovation does not only enable new ways of operating, but also modifies what is being done eventually.

Combining different media for teaching has long been considered beneficial for both teachers and learners, because the diversity of instructing channels has an engaging effect, extending the attention span of students by interesting them not being monotone. This view is shared by Decaigny (1974: 116), who states that a continuous use of a single apparatus ends up destroying its impact.

Equally beneficial has traditionally been considered the implementation of multimedia devices for instruction. As stated by Richards (1978: 253), "students learn through different media".

Instead of combining different media to cover different skills, an improved view would make use of a single channel including different media in itself, called multimedia, which covers all the skills targeted by eliciting the utilization of multiple senses. If you have multimedia equipment available, it can be endlessly useful (Stevick 1982: 118).

From a teaching point of view, multimedia is considered a great asset because it enables integrative learning. By having more senses involved, learning derives into experiencing, and it has an impact on both understanding and retention.

> Media, by altering the environment, evoke in us unique ratios of sense perceptions. The extension of any one sense alters the way we think and act- the way we perceive the world.
>
> Celce-Murcia, 1979: 38

Since motivating students is one of the areas of teaching educators can have an impact on, it is their responsibility to create an appealing learning atmosphere attracting students, making learning both desirable and enjoyable. Sensorial learning implies a feeling of vividness and authenticity, being it extremely engaging, as explained by Hoffman (1986: 235).

The appreciation of the instructional implementation of multimedia is not related with the façade of learning. Making learning look updated and computerized is not listed as one of the objectives of applying multimedia on education.

The key factor when introducing multimedia into teaching is making it in a didactic way, since the purpose aimed at is transmitting information in a comprehensible way for it to be correctly acquired first, and utilized later, by students.

Quoting Alcón (2002: 35), "any element used in an educational situation in order to ease the comprehension and utilization of the acquired information is labeled as didactic means ".

Other than engaging students, adding authenticity, and multiplying the senses being utilized while learning, by enabling interaction, multimedia applications can be used for autonomous learning, with the obvious limitations of not being the student accompanied and monitored by a teacher.

Multimedia applications are interactive programs specifically built for students to practice and learn autonomously, including different learning itineraries, activities with self-correction, embedded dictionary and pronunciation models or even voice recording and replaying capabilities.

The most recurrent sensorial prompts utilized when multimedia is applied to teaching are both visual and auditory, since they enhance the power of presentation teachers have, although other senses are sometimes used, mainly in elementary schooling with young students whose targeted contents are simple enough to make if viable.

Thus, multimedia as a concept is a force to be reckoned with when dealing with ways of improving the presenting capabilities of teachers (Chadwick, 1975: 53).

Language and Arts is the area benefitting most from visual and auditory aids supplementing the role of the teacher, because of the nature of the field, and also because both sight and hearing are part of the reception and transmission of information demanded through communication, being reading and writing part of the process, as appreciated by Cantón (1996: 111).

Teaching reading combining both visual and auditory clues has been proposed as an alternative to traditional reading for a long time now. This multimedia reading proposal boosts the cognitive effects that traditional reading teaching techniques have on the students.

Recognizing that reading rate is a significant factor in comprehension, and referring back to Williams (1990: 112), it has been proposed in the past that students could improve their skills by combining texts and audiotapes of the texts. In this procedure, students listen to a tape of a text while they follow along in their books.

An example of teaching in general being revolutionized by hearing being implemented is the appearance of audio portfolios, which make it possible for a teacher to share what a student has accomplished with the parents, by sending an mp3 file containing the progress through the Internet (Burger 1996: 149)

This makes portfolios immediately accessible for parents, who can also access it from home or even from work, at any time of the day.

Written versions of the audio portfolio are also being utilized, called electronic portfolios, featuring the same accessibility characteristics. Traditional folder portfolios obviously start to fade as their electronic counterfeit arises, but the combination of them both is, although redundant, still possible.

Podcasting is erupting nowadays as a way of publishing audio files. Internet works as a host for limitless audio files being shared with different purposes.

Retrieving podcasts is easy since they are downloadable, but the arousal of certain sites collecting podcasts makes it even easier to find. On top of that, podcasting can be not only recorded but also broadcast, which makes it an ideal tool for projects of audio signal transmission similar to traditional radio stations but armored with new features.

Utilizing the radio with teaching purposes is not really that new, in fact Lamb (1967: 58) explains how in the United Kingdom, the very first radio program being recorded to be used by schools was broadcast in 1921 by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Despite that, the traditional problem posed by both the radio and the TV being used as instructing tools is now overcome by podcasting, because traditional methods lacked flexibility and presented students with some time constraints whereas podcast are totally manageable in those terms.

Teachers have the possibility of recording podcasts and providing students with them. By doing it different objectives are accomplished. First, students avoid taking notes because they know that the notes are going to be given to them in a podcast, which means students can focus on understanding contents instead of writing them down at school.

On top of that, according to Burguer (1996: 155), those auditory students who learn best through listening to the contents instead of reading the contents, being them very receptive to subtleties of information carried by the tone and timbre of voices, and being print material best learned by them when they hear it read or spoken, are addressed best by implementing podcasting based instruction.

For language teaching specific purposes, audio is extremely important because it represents the model of pronunciation the student is to imitate.

Sound recordings being accessible through the Internet enable students to work on their pronunciation, by mimicking the auditory models anytime and anywhere. This is possible not only outside the school but also as part of school instruction implemented by teachers.

A project on this field has been conducted by the Carnegie Mellon University, which shares its collection of sound recordings with language learning purposes.

The Oral Language Archive (OLA) was initiated at Carnegie Mellon University in 1994. Its goal is to establish a collection of digitalized sound recordings for foreign language learning that is accessible from around the world via the Internet (Levy 1997: 37).

In the visual field, because of it being implemented for a really long time, a wide variety of devices can be found, along with its updated replacing versions.

One of the remaining visual devices that are being replaced by more recent gadgets is the overhead projector, which was thought of as a supplement accompanying written documents. In fact, according to Decaigny (1974: 177), the OHP was invented to meet the requirements of the US Army, making possible to Project documents in standard light situations. Since then, the projector has developed greatly, and its applications have also grown enormously.

Following suit, after World War II, various audiovisual innovations other than the OHP were introduced into the American educational system after having been previously adopted in army training, as appreciated by Ball (1970: 101).

The overhead projector has long been used especially in public schools for presenting print medium exercises, illustrations and graphics, as explained by Celce-Murcia (1979: 45). It was criticized because, even though it worked without requiring such darkness that instruction would be impossible, handling the OHP slides was not practical for classroom management purposes. This problem gave room for the digital projector to replace the overhead by solving the handling problem, due to the possibility of the projection being manipulated by using a remote control from a distanced position.

> Using the OHP is both advantageous and disadvantageous at the same time, because it enables teachers to project images without the need of total darkness in the room but it does not allow teachers to really manipulate the slides once they are created. As opposed to the OHP, the retroreflective projector offers teachers all the benefits of an old-school blackboard without having to give their backs to the students.
>
> Arconada (2002: 45)

Visual projections, once the positioning of the teachers was improved with the arrival of digital projectors, can be used as classroom management tools by using one single screen for the whole group of students to look at.

If teachers place themselves next to the screen, all eyes are on them, so their messages are received without any physical obstacles, easing monitoring.

At the same time, digitalized projections can also be displayed on multiple different screens, so that individualized instruction is as feasible as group instruction is, depending on the displaying details.

> Digitalized graphic presentations can be displayed both on individual monitors and on big screens to be accessed by a whole group of people by means of smartboards or projectors, avoiding unhealthy body positioning of the students that could affect their school performances, allowing educators to maintain visual contact with students while doing so, improving communication.
>
> Domínguez (2006: 42)

It is clear that to correctly exploit the visual media, educators who are to manage the devices through which this is ambitioned, are to be extensively trained before it can be brought down to actual instruction hours in a successful way.

Acquiring visual media devices does not provide teaching with any benefit by itself, since success resides on the expertise of the person behind the devices, and preparation is a must in this case (Ferrés 1990: 125).

The best case scenario is the implementation of multimedia devices which appeal to both visual and auditory senses at once, to achieve a more well-rounded integral feeling experience.

These devices can be used not only for helping instruction, but also for helping with the training and development of teachers. Regarding the latter, teleconferencing via radio, television or computer allows teachers to exchange experiences, develop curricula, and coordinate educational programs among a number of schools in a district.

The camera is another really engaging tool that also utilizes both video and audio. It is so engaging because of the immediacy of the taping process, being the recorded session available for it to be displayed right away.

Students feel attracted to this instantaneous output of an integral experience, apart from being able to analyze themselves and their targeted abilities from an outside point of view. Even though it might seem differently, this works extraordinarily well with elementary school students, who experience both being taped and watching the film strip with enormous excitement.

> Camcorders are engaging just by the mere fact of being capable of creating, and they are also capable of immediate display of what has been created, being the activity including video recording a learning empowering element.
>
> Ferrés (1990: 162)

Apart from the engaging effect of cameras, they present teacher with an ideal teaching situation, because resembling real life communicative situations is attainable. Thus, students practice while being motivated by the channel itself, and they have the opportunity of later analyzing themselves, and also of being analyzed by the teacher or even by partners, to pinpoint the individual weak points to be worked upon.

Experiencing real life simulations through IT enables students to practice what they learn, acknowledging what their weak points are to better understand their needs, encouraging them to research on specific improvable areas of their language.

Traditional blackboards have been utilized for a long time, and they still are, but smart boards are replacing them at a steady pace for obvious reasons.

Blackboards took the attention of the students and teachers benefitted from it, but because of the amount of time needed to write on them being considerable, students lost their focus after a while and the instructional effect diminished along with it (Domínguez 2006: 41).

Smart boards solve this problem by automatically displaying what teacher wants to prepare as a presentation. Plus, smart boards add visual and auditory capabilities that blackboards could only ambition, displaying video to create animated presentations that are far more appealing than traditional chalky ones, which were slow and static.

> Traditional blackboards are being steadily accompanied or even taken over by smart boards, because the latter ones are capable of fulfilling every feature offered by traditional blackboards plus on-screen management of video and audio, easing the teachers to present new contents in an appealing manner and the student to better comprehend through experiencing activities that would never be feasible inside a classroom otherwise.
>
> Cal (2005: 159)

Through video and audio, language teaching could benefit of great pronunciation practice exercises on smart boards or any other device with comparable capabilities. Visual cues help students articulate their mouths with accuracy by imitating the pronunciation displayed, and at the same time auditory clues provide students with a model to be imitated, which can be played over and over again (Domínguez 2006: 43).

7.5 From paper books to electronic books

Making use of electronic books, teachers have access to books published worldwide, instead of accessing just those books published in their home countries, which limits the contents to be worked upon.

Having access to the whole corpus of books published worldwide due to the possibilities offered by the Internet, makes a change regarding information accessibility, and it reinvents the rules when it comes to acquiring books since bookstores are not the only source anymore.

> Most local bookstores do not stock many foreign language books, but teachers can use online libraries from around the world to provide reading materials that students can use for practice within their target language.
>
> Cavanaugh (2006: 49)

Digital libraries are at the final stages of acquiring well-roundness and completion, since original digital libraries were truly limited as opposed to current digital libraries, which include a wide variety of books, which are even written in many different languages.

This achievement is not only valid for research books which appeal to further education, but also to specific books aimed at children, which represents a powerful and convenient tool for early language teaching. In fact, quoting Cavanaugh (2006: 49), "the International Children's Digital Library has children's books in more than twenty-seven languages".

While the prices of textbooks has kept increasing during the last decades, their monopoly has been reducing due to the development of electronic books, which are much cheaper and obviously lighter, since uncountable books fit in only one electronic reading device. On top of that, the cost of textbooks in recent years has risen considerably, especially the textbooks utilized by universities, being reported that from 1983 to 1993, general campus textbook costs increased more than ninety percent, and from 1998 to 2006 textbook costs have risen an additional forty-one percent (Cavanaugh 2006: 40).

It is not only the increasing price of textbooks what burdens the budgets of schools, but also the fact that books are not everlasting, and they are to be renewed on a yearly basis, while electronic books are not exposed to damaging uses leading to books getting torn, dirty or ear dogged.

Therefore, the maintenance of paper books is far pricier than the maintenance of electronic books, because the replacement costs of paper books is expensive as opposed to the costs of maintaining an electronic book reader up and running. Case in point, workbooks, which are pointed out by Anderson (1985: 53) as expensive elements since they are consumable items to be renewed by schools on a yearly basis.

Even though present computers are nothing like what computers were twenty years ago, books have not undergone the same process of renewal until now, when along with the print format, a digital version is rapidly growing, offering teachers new advantages and options. One of these advantages is the size of digital books, because while the average middle school student in the United States carries more than twenty pounds in a book bag, doctors suggest that in order to avoid physical injury people should never carry more than ten percent of their body weight.

Hardware devices supporting electronic books weight as little as a pound, and a gigabyte of memory could contain more than two hundred illustrated college reference books in PDF format, representing not only a cost-effective but also health-conscious alternative.

The successful development of electronic books is such a reality that some books are even discontinuing their paper version, focusing on the digital version of the book. Thus, certain volumes are no longer available in paper format, being them available as an electronic book.

Although it depends on the books chosen at any given grade level and at any given part of the world, there are some cases where most of the material elected for instructional purposes is available in digital versions at no cost.

Up to twenty-seven percent of the suggested K-12 reading material for language arts in the state of Florida could be obtained at no cost to students, teachers or schools with Internet access, topping up to seventy percent of the required reading for 11th grade (Cavanaugh 2006: 42).

Many are the projects which willingly compile digital versions of books to provide Internet users with them for free, making the readable or downloadable online. Because of the educational benefit of these projects, profits are not taken into account by the compilers, whose only intend is to universalize the access to reading.

The Internet Public Library, an educational initiative from the University of Michigan's School of Information, claims to have links to more than 40,000 e-books that can be read online or downloaded for free, providing teachers with numerous texts to give students at no cost.

Some universities even decide to expose students to reading electronic books as part of the contents of certain subjects found in the itinerary of educational degrees, so that they experience what their future students would by reading e-books.

This first-hand experience is extremely beneficial for future teachers to have, because it allows them to placing themselves in the role of a child facing such a new resource, and also to better understand the usage of electronic books as one other valid instructional material to be used at school.

The College of Education and Human Services at the University of Florida is implementing a program in which undergraduate reading and ESL courses educate students

concerning e-books, having them read one e-book of their choice plus another e-book that would be appreciated for children that they expect to teach, as explained by Cavanaugh (2006: 6).

Electronic books are not only growing in number and popularity, but they are also evolving. In their development, they have undergone a very special change represented by the introduction of hypertexts.

Originally, electronic books were digitalized copies of paper books that aimed at accuracy, because they were not supposed to adapt the content of the original paper version, but to mirror it instead.

Because new technologies allow readers to do more things with a text than mere reading, some electronic books included features that were exclusively available in digital formats. An electronic book is capable of offering the reader certain interaction, transforming pages from passive element containing words to active elements of reading, reacting to being touched by the fingers of the reader in various ways.

Electronic books are capable of containing moving images, sounds and other multimedia features that are impossible for paper books. One of the exclusive features of digital books is the hypertext, which is a text containing active words, phrases or even images, that once activated throw you into a totally different material from or out of the book itself.

For students, hypertext promises increasingly reader-centered encounters with text, because the readers feels the capability of choosing the path to be followed while reading, which could derive from that followed by a different reader who chooses to activate different

hypertexts. This represents an improvement in the individualization of reading, and a totally different appealing feature of books.

> By allowing readers to choose their own reading paths, hypertext cedes to the reader some of the authority that both manuscript and print grant to the author.
>
> Tunam (1992: 70)

Because of electronic books containing hypertexts connecting books with materials out of the book itself, the connection of different concepts through readings turns feasible. Therefore, books containing information related to one specific subject, could jump to certain information dealt with in a different subject by making use of hypertexts, interconnecting both subjects by doing so.

Therefore, teaching at an institution where educational hypertext systems are available and in wide use, one has a much greater chance of successfully carrying out interdisciplinary projects (Tunam 1992: 75).

The choice between textbooks or electronic books for educational purposes sometimes does not depend on the right aspects. Instead of choosing the option which fits the demands of the students best, other forces such as budgeting or the subsequent amount of work required on the teacher might balance it out.

Teachers rely on textbooks for reasons other than the authority textbooks assume. Teachers save preparation time by systematically presenting information from a textbook, finances limit materials available, and managing students is easier with only a few materials

because routines are easier to control. Indeed, and according to Alvermann (1987: 95), reliance on textbooks occur only because many powerful forces contribute to it.

7.6 Tablets

The cheaper and more portable the computer is, the better implementation can be made of it for educational purposes. This is so because school budgets are limited, and because being portable students could even bring them home at the end of the day to keep working out of school, completing the arranged assignments.

If both requisites are met, price and portability, students could even have a device individually assigned for their personal usage. Tablet computers meet these requirements, representing the optimum computing device to channel IT applied teaching and learning. In that sense, Cantón (1996: 438) points out how "traditionally we use to think of the implementation of microcomputers in education as an individualized process ".

Hand-held devices have been around for a long time, but it is now when they are powerful and capable enough of being considered appropriate for educational purposes. Originally, hand-held devices met the size demands but failed at meeting the processing power demand, so they were utilized for basic computing.

The hand-held computer is somewhat larger than a normal pocket calculator, contains a microcomputer chip and sufficient memory to allow simple programs to be entered and run, and sells for only a few hundred dollars. It is both much cheaper and considerably more portable than the desktop computer.

It is this lack of processing power, along with the absence of cutting edge software to be run on them, what diminished the impact of the first microcomputers in daily life instruction at school. Microcomputers have reached schools, but they have had little impact on many areas of the curriculum, as stated by Hameyer (1989: 129).

Consequently, researchers ambitioned building a hand-held computer with similar capabilities to that of a desktop computer, to bring standard processing power, instead of a reduced one, to the hands of users making real computing meet real portability. Twentieth century examples of research work on this field are Xerox´s Dynabook and Fujitsu´s Stylistic 2300, both containing multimedia capabilities in a format resembling that of a paper book.

Bertram (2003: 47) explains how in California, USA, at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center in the 1970s, Alan Kay led a group of talented researchers with a single vision: to design and build the Dynabook, a multimedia computer the size and shape of an ordinary notebook.

Bertram (2003: 48) also refers to how in a press release issued in January 1999 the Fujitsu company announced the Stylistic 2300, a tablet computer the size, shape, and weight of a large-format book, with a new color "sunlight" display for reading outdoors, pen input, stereophonic sound, and a screen that can show full-motion video.

For a long time, contained pricing represented a barrier for microcomputers to advance in their development, since increasingly limited budgeting constrained unrealistic research, forcing it to address real commercial situations.

Having to tackle that issue helped tablets being created, because a compact format and a user friendly interface away from groundbreaking technology were ways of cutting production costs and bringing computers closer to people at the same time.

> Who declared that "one of the main reasons not to advise using technology is, obviously, the cost derived from it. According to a report filed by the National Engineering Academy it is a low cost unit what is needed, compact and with a simple operating system capable of being utilized by students without special technical training.
>
> Armsey (1975: 28)

The development of microelectronics has made possible to achieve the aforementioned goal. Computers costs have been decreasing and processing power has been increasing as microelectronics has been utilized.

Thus, new computers have appeared revolutionizing the IT world, its applications and the willingness of people to start using them due to them being extremely user friendly.

Of special relevance has been the appealing role touch screens are playing on children, who experience a relation with computing devices based on the natural and uncanny channel represented by the tactile technology.

Children are not the easiest target when it comes to introducing computing as a complement of traditional teaching, because their attention span is really short, and because of being reluctant to overwhelming formal training on how to handle traditional computers having a keyboard as an intermediary and an OS which is not easily understandable for them.

The touch screen currently plays a key role in the educational use of the computer (Sharp 1996: 312), representing an inflection point regarding how appealing and innate the interaction of students with computers is.

Apart from being appropriate for students of all ages, tablets are revolutionary because of being extremely portable. This enables students to reconsider former boundaries of teaching, such as time and place constraints, since tablets being portable means that reading electronic books on them can be accomplished at school but also elsewhere, at school times but also at any other given time.

The image of reading practice being only developed at school times, on a school desk and having the teacher around for corrections, is virtually transforming. Now, the aforementioned scenario is only one of many possible scenarios, since handheld devices solve the problem of having to read in a specific location and in a specific body position.

Even writing is being reinvented thanks to computers being implemented for educational purposes. Thus, hypertexts linking different writing pieces together are creating multilayered writing spaces that had not been seen before.

Writing, when tagging along computing, grows new dimensions instead of being a linear activity, giving birth to countless new possibilities for creation. As pointed out by Tunam (1992: 20), the computer as hypertext constitutes a new writing space with qualities unlike those of the previous spaces of handwriting and printing.

7.7 Software

The development of hardware has preceded its software counterfeit regarding language learning contents.

The exponential growth of hardware was foreseeable, along with its reduced pricing and increased power, both being currently confirmed by the appearance of tablets and microcomputers.

High quality reduced priced educational software has not followed suit with the hardware development, ending up outpaced by such a rapid evolution of computers. Even though current hardware meets and, in some cases, even exceeds the educational demands, it is software what connects these developed devices with their practical usage, and its deficiencies are anchoring the whole process.

The provision of high-quality, reasonably priced educational software is the principal technological challenge, since low-cost hardware was long predicted to be widely available to most homes, offices and schools.

Recently, software development is propelling itself as a consequence of the serious interest education has on the acquisition of tablets for instructional purposes, and the integration of such devices in daily schooling.

Given that both hardware and software are capable of experiencing great development in short amounts of time, software is to keep up by matching the hardware industry pace. Thus, it

seems reasonable to expect an exponential growth of educational software being published to exploit the whole potential of tablets in schools. Software and equipment evolve very rapidly, and consequently the updating of software is essential.

The awaited educational software is to be interactive in its nature, because of the user friendly demands of young students, and the active role of touch screens which elicit users to constantly create inputs in an easy way. Computerized responses also need to be immediate for the flow of both input and output not to be interrupted, channeled by software making that interaction as natural as possible through the appropriate GUI.

> In order to keep students attention and increase their involvement in the learning activity, software developers should design software that is interactive in nature and that immediate feedback is to be provided whenever possible and appropriate.
>
> Posteguillo (2001: 201)

7.8 Social and economic background

IT applied language learning brings along some social and economic background side effects, being them positive and negative.

A positive side effect is the fact that, due to the decrease experimented by the prices of computers, especially those aimed at educational purposes, more people are being granted access to them.

Nowadays, the price of computers does not represent a barrier for almost any child regardless of the familiar income status, whereas not so long ago computers where not accessible for other than accommodated families.

According to Carbonara (2005: 149), an Office of Technology Assessment study concluded that students from high-income families had far more access to computers in schools than peers from low-income families. African-American students used computers in schools less than Caucasian students, especially in elementary schools. Pupils whose native language was not English had even less access to computers. Finally, low-achieving students were less likely to use machines to enhance reasoning and problem solving and more likely to use them for drill and practice.

A collateral damage of the popularization of computers is the sense of dependency some people have suffered, who have been losing their social skills other than through computers and the Internet.

The universal communication capability computers offer users is something that was unheard of, extraordinary because of the immediacy, cheapness, accessibility and globalizing features bringing people together.

On the other hand, the virtual communication promoted by new technologies, especially through the arousal of social networks, has diminished traditional communication.

> The easier it becomes to communicate worldwide due to the enhancement of virtual communication, the more cases of socially isolated autistic individuals are documented, being them people with many virtual but few physical communication skills.
>
> Cal (2005: 158)

7.9 Technoliteracy

Most students are surrounded by technology from the day they are born, so they grow up familiarized with their presence and their use, unlike what happened not so long ago.

These people are prone to acquire user level mastery of technologies with ease, but that does not equal technoliteracy. For a user to become technoliterate, that person is to master not only the user entry level aspects of educational computing, but also the managing ones, because many IT applied multimedia instructing devices require students to create, on top of consuming, output material being it visual, auditory or both.

> Nowadays, most students have a background as users of new technologies, but this does not equal being technoliterate since they need to act not only as users but also as makers when dealing with computer assisted language learning. Surfing the internet is not the same as making a website, and downloading a podcast is not the same as making one. This is why constructing a short survey on technoliteracy for the students to fill out seems adequate, enabling the teacher to judge on the feasibility of integrating new technologies when teaching a specific group of students.
>
> Ban (2009: 79)

Therefore, both teachers and students need training in order to acquire technoliteracy. Technological literacy training consists, largely, of the transposition of traditional values and objectives of education to the new technologies.

Technological literacy training covers the range of faculties and skills necessary to be able to determine which information and tools are needed to efficiently use the technological resources, to know how to gain access to them, select and use them in a suitable manner.

Technoliteracy is a living entity in constant change, just as technology is. As a consequence, the training experimented to achieve technoliteracy is also constant because it needs to cover the unstoppable technological advances to avoid ending outdated both as a user and as an educator.

Technology regularly and systemically changes literacy through the evolution of literacy-based technological advances, provoking a transformative change. Technology and literacy also interact and change each other as new technologies generate new potential and implementation initiates variations to the technology, in a transactional change. Finally, technology and literacy are in a constant state of change, demonstrated through human impact with new technologies, representing a deictic change (Carbonara, 2005: 50).

7.10 Implementation

Computers and computing have become a way of life and the primary means for doing work in today's world, being the need for technology skills and knowledge in schools, the

workforce, and society, an obvious extension and consequence of living in the digital environment of what Alvin Toffler coined as "the Information Age".

The abrupt appearance and globalization of the Internet has revolutionized computing, and, along with the invention of new technologies, it has opened doors for updated teaching views that are worth considering.

Stressing the educational potential borne by the exposure to foreign languages experimented by Internet users is Domínguez (2006: 16), who states that "the connection between Internet, new technologies and the use of foreign languages online is so strong that it is worth thinking about its educational effect ".

The drive to bring schools technologically in step with the workplace responds to the fear of students not being prepared to compete in the job market, where technology prevails. Computers are the future and schools must prepare students for it.

Being it clear how new students grow surrounded by new technology that was inexistent for previous generations, and familiarizing with these devices is a natural process that poses no threat whatsoever, the time has arrived for that atmosphere to be transferred to schools.

Utilizing not only but also computerized devices for instruction, prevents teaching from facing monotony, and helps knowledge being acquired through a variety of different channels enriching the process.

Thus, applying new technologies when language teaching is especially profitable when seen as one out of many learning tools, because considering it the only learning tool would lower its appealing power.

Regarding language teaching, almost every aspect of a language there is to master can benefit from the existence of a wide range of diverse channels of instruction, but it is reading the skill which can clearly benefit the most because of the amount of time needed to master it, and the benefits of having different tools to achieve that objective. Hildreth (1958: 253) supports the idea of the use of diversified materials reflecting an expanding concept of how young children perfect reading skills.

The implementation of multimedia material when teaching reading has long been ambitioned, since the benefits of experiencing a text while reading it are clear regarding retention and acquisition. This ambition is clear when we quote Hildreth (1958: 314), who over fifty years ago foresaw how "perhaps in the future, beginning reading lessons will be taught largely through the combination of televised pictures or movies with accompanying text ".

Another obvious strength IT applied teaching brings to the table is the engaging power it has on many different students, since it appeals to elementary students as much as it does to elder students now that computing has simplified its GUI, with the development of handheld devices with touch screens registering the input.

It is on teachers to keep students interested on contents, as it is to make them enjoy the learning process as much as possible. Therefore, as long as new technologies being applied for instructional purposes contribute to creating the desired learning atmosphere or benefit teaching in any way, educators are to be held accountable for the correct implementation of these new tools.

"Teachers should stimulate the learning desire of their students, promote their interest and their participation, being interactive technological resources capable of becoming an important motivational help". Through this statement, Cantón (1996: 42) emphasizes how resourceful the interactivity that new technologies bring to the table is, especially in terms of motivation.

This is especially relevant nowadays, because it is now undeniable the fact that computers have reached schools to stay. From the integration of language laboratories in education in the 1960s, and the development of the CALL methodology, which stands out for its engaging power and its interaction and multimedia related capabilities, computers have become inherent to language learning.

In the past, IT applied language teaching has been experimented withholding unsure expectations about the worthiness of the outcome. After a trial period, some defining factors unveil the validity of the presence of computing in education, being the enormously improved ratio of students per computer found in American schools one of them.

Referring to the database compiled by the U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment, in 1981 there were, on average, 125 students per computer in the United States. In 1991, there were 18 students per computer, so it is safe to state that the school use of computers has spread deeply.

The mere presence of technology in schools does not equal a real implementation of IT applied language teaching, because the use of that technology has to be based on the appropriate scaffold regulating a correct application.

The absence of a valid frame connecting technology with teaching has the accessory hardware utilization as a consequence, without targeting any specific objective. Therefore, unregulated usage of computers in schools does not have any serious instructional value for students.

> Penetration of technology into schools does not necessarily guarantee access and use, since for those individual students who use computers, they spend on average, a little more than one hour a week using them, which means four percent of all instructional time.
>
> Carbonara (2005: 149).

The bridge connecting computing with teaching, making IT applied instruction meaningful, is the curriculum. In order to justify using computing for educational purposes, it has to address specific goals and the activity has to be developed following specific methodologies, both of them stated as curriculum standards.

Backing the aforementioned idea is Loyo (2005: 36), who explains how after consulting experts with at least ten years University level teaching experience, who have directed research projects, published articles on new technologies and education, exhibited topic related presentations in meetings, belong to professional associations and are linked to other Universities, seven out of ten experts agreed with the idea of the curriculum being the agent in new technologies integration in education, responding to paradigms such as the objectives, methodology and the features of specific students.

The case with teaching strategies needed for an appropriate integration of computing when teaching languages is similar to that of the educational software development. They both have been surpassed by the technological development of hardware devices.

Owning a vehicle without knowing how to drive it properly is of limited functionality, and so is including computerized devices in schools without them being mastered when it comes to using them as teaching aids.

Traditional methodologies do not provide educators with valid responses to their will to make use of new technologies. Even modern methodologies are outdated when compared with the possibilities offered by the constantly evolving world of technology, being MALL and CALL the ones with an adequate spectrum to address the aforementioned needs.

Thus, it is safe to expect for new methodologies to appear and focus on new technologies being implemented as instructional tools regarding language learning.

According to Ban (2009: 87), in order for a new technology to be successfully implemented into language teaching, a new teaching strategy is needed, working as a catalyst for the integration of technology. Access to professionals with expertise in technology and pedagogy, as well as an adequate infrastructure are also necessary steps to be taken for the sake of the IT integration in education.

Depending on the stage ELLs are, IT is expected to provide teachers with different features in order to maximize the benefits of integrating new technologies into language teaching.

Thus, ELLs at the preproduction stage need technology that supports text with images since it links words with their visual representation easing memorization.

ELLs at the early production stage need listening and comprehension based support because these students are going through a silent period trying to understand and interiorize the language around them so videos, podcasts and even digital stories are the targeted features to be implemented by IT at this point.

ELLs at the intermediate fluency stage need IT to support and promote speaking, reading and writing skills because of the creative nature of this stage, so contacting other ELLs via electronic mails or VoIPs is ideal.

ELLs at the speech emergent stage need IT to support subject-specific language ability so tandem work fits the needs in this case.

Regarding the utilization of the scaffold regulating the meaningful implementation of new technologies in schools represented by updated curriculum standards, recent efforts are being devoted to achieving that objective by means of federal programs researching on how to correctly integrate computing in education.

The federal grant program Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers To Use Technology has supported the development of models for integrating technology into teacher education programs and K-12 curriculum, playing a role in how school teachers could integrate technology into

authentic learning experiences in order to teach more effectively using a variety of technological tools, as explained by Conneo (2004: 2)

Among the many barriers delaying the arrival of new technologies is listed the insufficient training, and consequently knowledge, many teachers have on computing. School districts have implemented computing training for educators through in-services far too late, and old school teachers being reluctant to implementing IT applied teaching in a meaningful way because of their traditional teaching style being conservative, have followed suit.

The lack of opportunity to develop an understanding of the potential presented by the innovation, and the lack of teacher experience with new technologies, exploring, experimenting, and learning how these tools can enrich the learning experience, represent a delay in the impact between the arrival of new technology and the implementation literacy needed to make the technology useful for teaching and learning.

> There are some major points to take into account when implementing the use of technology in language teaching: the distance between technology advances and the capability language teachers have to integrate them in teaching, the superficial use of advanced technologies when applying them to teaching, the lack of didactic base regarding both the use of new technologies when teaching a language and its training for language teachers, and reluctance on using new technologies when teaching languages.
>
> Arconada (2002: 85)

Another barrier has been the argument of software not being developed enough to meaningfully integrate new technologies in school in a didactic way. Hardware and maintenance

expenses go along that argument, although it has been already explained how computing costs have been reduced enormously and educational software is growing exponentially, making this argument lose its validity to a certain point.

On top of that, those educators who are trying to individually take computing a step further by integrating it into their teaching sessions, have not been finding reward for doing so from the organizations they work for.

> The lack of infrastructure, maintenance and software is being held by teachers as a barrier for incorporating new technologies in language teaching, along with the absence of recognition for those who do implement the use of new technologies in their classrooms.
>
> Loyo (2005: 69)

Teachers have also feared, especially at the first stages of this revolutionary process of modernization of traditional teaching styles, being replaced by computers. Since it has never been an objective, not even a feasible option, educators have understood how new technologies are not being proposed as replacements but rather as teaching aids for teachers to make use of easing their task in the process.

Computers are not proposed as substitutes for teachers but rather as supporting devices for their explanations, classroom management and tutoring, being the latter the only area where deep self-sufficiency could be developed.

Before integrating new technologies in school instruction, both teachers and students are to access these technologies without didactic objectives being set. Teachers need to master the

technologies that are to be integrated later on, and a carefully planned implementing schedule needs to be developed in order to maximize the benefits of it.

According to a 1991 research conducted by Sandholtz, Ringstaff and Dwyer, high technology access by both teachers and students was proven to be vital regarding technology integration, along with sharing experiences on the matter between educators and the feasibility of those multiple level changes required by the successful implementation of these innovations, as explained by Carbonara (2005: 51).

In order to avoid frustration on the students because of a lack of knowledge or understanding about how a device works, it is not advisable to integrate the device to teach new content without having practiced with it first. Implementing content teaching through new IT devices is to be preceded by familiarizing students with it, so that the process is not interrupted by not knowing how to use the hardware.

Even elementary students are eligible to work with computers, and it has been already explained how these students are currently growing surrounded by new technology. This, along with the user friendly computing being developed nowadays, makes elementary students not only eligible but also ideal targets of IT applied instruction.

Before tablets were developed, the existence of intermediary hardware for entering input data, such as the keyboard, made it more difficult for young students who were still learning to read and write to utilize computers with educational purposes. Even though it was far more difficult than what it is today, it was by no means impossible, as still illiterate elementary students have, with the help of their teachers, communicated through electronic mails with other people in experimental activities.

These experimental activities include, according to LaMont (2000: 25), elementary students being invited by the teacher to write electronic mails even before they know how to write and they accept because they like to play, even on the computer. The teacher offers to do the typing or help with it, depending on the production stage the student is at.

The messages are sent to family and friends since it is best for the students to interact with known people, having the opportunity to physically engage in verbal discussions about the messages with them when they meet, allowing the students to understand that the messages are being received by an actual person, not a machine.

Some children just type randomly on the keyboard because they only know that texts contain words, and words contain letters. In these cases, teachers send second electronic mails transcribing the message the students wanted to transmit through their random typing, allowing the receiver to respond appropriately to the message the child sent without undermining the belief of the child in being the writer.

Once the students learn the relationship between sounds and symbols, second electronic mails are generally not needed even if the understanding of space between words is missing.

8. LANGUAGE LEARNING METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

Methodologies have suffered severe alterations throughout history, updating themselves by standing on the shoulders of previous methods to provide students with more appropriate tools for the time being.

One example of this is clear when we have a look at the timing utilized in language teaching, since back in the origins of classic language teaching methods a late beginning was believed to be most appropriate. In fact, according to Widdowson (1978: 15), secondary level is the level at which most general foreign language courses are introduced.

Early second language learning is presently being ambitioned and worked towards, because from the times of classical methods up to now, processing and cognition have both been understood differently. On top of that, second language late start had to do with the aim of the instruction itself, which prioritized translation, being a different goal from contemporary methods which are based on communication, a much more feasible feature for a young student to acquire.

Our lack of certainty about how language is put to communicative use might incline us to the view that we should wait for more definitive findings to emerge from research before we adopt a communicative orientation to the teaching of language. This would be unfortunate since it would imply that language teachers are simply consumers of other people's products, that they are incapable of initiative and must only make advances in methodology across ground already prepared by proclaimed theorists (Widdowson, H.G. 1978, p.162).

Since present currents regarding language teaching are mainly focused on acquiring effective communication, the usage of the target language while learning it seems reasonable, and it is in fact a huge ambition of most methodologies being implemented nowadays.

Obviously, language teaching has had different goals throughout time, so the conception of the usage of target languages while being learnt has been constantly evolving, and so has been the actual utilization of target languages in teaching situations.

In foreign language classes, states Richards (1978: 100), the student's productive use of the target language may vary according to the role the child is required to play within the classroom learning situation.

As many senses as possible are been implemented when teaching in general, and when teaching foreign languages in particular, since it is believed that the more sensorial teaching becomes, the better acquisition is accomplished.

In order to achieve that, new technologies and communicative methodologies share hands to provide students with such an experience, but it has not always been like that since paper books have dominated language teaching over the years, and they still do despite the constant blossom of new techniques to be applied and worked on when instructing. Supporting that idea is the following quote by Rivers (1978: 7), "much of any foreign language learned at school is acquired from books".

Individual students have individual needs teachers are to meet to the best of their abilities, so even though specific approaches and curricula are chosen to scaffold language teaching of groups of students, it is in the hands of the teachers to adapt the chosen material so that goals are really attainable by the students, avoiding unnecessary frustration stages that are

never beneficial. Therefore, as Hoffman (1986: 233) reminds us, the teacher must diagnose the learner's state of readiness in relation to the learning objective and to the content of the lesson.

At the earliest stages of language teaching, reading becomes the channel chosen to nourish students with new information and constant practice. Independent silent reading enhances the processing of the rules utilized by a language, and enables students to constantly practice without the presence of the teacher or the scholar landscape. Independent silent reading is also viewed by Hildreth (1958: 303) as the chief goal toward which the primary pupils are working to gain power in.

Maximizing profits from such short attention spans as those of children, sensorial clues are excellent tools when drawing the attention of young students, because of the engaging effect they have on them, making learning fun and desirable instead of being reluctant. Primary teachers make extensive use of audio-visual aids, games, and other devices for stimulating interest and supplementing textbook instruction in basic skills, as noted by Hildreth (1958: 313).

The use of traditional books, although being feasible to replace them by different learning tools, are obviously still valid nowadays as a teaching resource, but an excessive utilization of them blocking the renewal of the teaching methods and approaches means a prevention of the logical advance of the system.

There used to be no choice but to use regular books for teachers, but that statement is not valid any more. Educators may choose to maintain the same usage of regular books for instruction as opposed to renewing their methods, being choose the key word.

> The reason why our classrooms are saturated with text is that text was the first cheap, mass-produced form of knowledge representation we had.
>
> Tunam (1992: 246)

Educators are to be constantly trained to better adapt themselves to the evolving field they are dedicating their lives to. There is no room for static teachers who fight against evolution by not opening the doors of their classrooms to it, being regular books the only option for them to instruct, representing outdated teaching capabilities.

Old boundaries are not valid any more when teaching languages because the introduction of IT applied teaching resources is changing the rules of the game. Materials that were utilized because they were thought to be the best choice, are now totally surpassed by new technology rooted material opening doors that educators did not even consider years ago.

It would be safe to state that the application of new technologies in language teaching is revolutionizing the process itself, requiring new methodologies being implemented and new teaching approaches and techniques being adopted to follow suit with the new tools that go beyond what was possible, making uncharted waters seem reasonably reachable.

> Placing computers and their capability of processing information in the hands of both teachers and students, the possibility of initiating a revolution in education similar what the utilization of printed books at school meant appears.
>
> Apter (1976: 58)

As a consequence, infinite language teaching IT based applications are sprouting at a fast pace, including video-conferencing, podcasting or interactive reading, helping teachers address the specific needs of their students by implementing these new tools, which bring new

possibilities along, easing the process of addressing individual needs as appreciated by Reparaz (1992: 168).

By implementing the usage of computers to teach languages, a device is placed in between the teaching figure and the student, which is under the responsibility of the student, who feels implicated in the learning process.

> Learning with computers is a type of learning that characterises by easing the personal implication of the student regarding their learning power.
>
> Reparaz (1992: 181)

Because of the implementation of the usage of computers while teaching languages is growing exponentially, a need for an appropriate framework to sustain this growth seems necessary. Both educators and students need to be re-educated before diving into the technological area to maximize the benefits of the application of new technology.

Educating students to develop the necessary capabilities to live in a technological society, and incorporating new methodologies as part of the methodology are both teacher tasks.

Clearly stated goals are crucial to educational effectiveness. Goals allow educators to ensure curricular continuity across grade levels, they serve to identify priority areas and help assure allocation of educational resources to those priority areas, they assist instructional planning by clarifying purposes of learning, they facilitate identification and strengthening of weak curricular areas, they assist communication with students and parents by serving as a framework for reports of student progress, and they make possible assessment of how well school districts accomplish their priorities (Alvermann, 1987: 2).

Learning through the implementation of games is incredibly engaging, and it specially appeals to children because of their receptiveness towards playing games. In this sense, it is worth taking Ferrés (1990: 40) into consideration, who states that "it is clear that the idea of learning through gaming is still one of the most appealing versions in the eyes of educators, especially for those who teach young students".

The same way playing games improves the engaging effect while teaching and learning languages, including as many senses as possible in the process bear a similar effect, so multimedia applications are extremely profitable during instruction, being them especially mixable with new technologies.

Computers also offer the engaging component aforementioned, making learning feel fun, especially for young students, by appealing to them. On top of that, students who are afraid of making mistakes and being corrected in front of a crowd by their teacher, are prone to produce using new technologies because of the absence of an audience with that overwhelming effect on insecure students (Domínguez, 2006: 23).

> Taking multimedia instructing a step further, audio and video recording have engaging effects on the students, who feel attracted to the experiment of both recording and repeating language usage on camera, empowering the learning process.
>
> Ferrés (1990: 162)

IT implemented language teaching requires adapting existing methodologies, or even creating new ones, to maximize the profit taken from the introduction of new technologies to teach students.

The new learning possibilities accompanying these new technologies, require both teachers and students to be trained. Teachers need to master the devices chosen to be utilized while instructing, and students are not to be handled devices that are unknown for them without any previous training.

In that sense, and according to Arconada (2002: 86), integrating and implementing new technologies when teaching languages means adapting teaching methodologies, because it needs students to interact with new devices and get familiarized with them, it widens the doors of contacting with other language learners worldwide and it resizes the roles of both the teacher and the students.

The roles of teachers are changing because they are not the only authorized voice to follow in class any more, since by widening the windows students look at information through, new authorities fit in the instructing process. Teachers are not to be considered the only knowledgeable figures inside the classroom any more, either by students or by teachers themselves, but rather information managers, learning supervisors and orientation providers (Cal, 20: 160).

Traditionally, teachers have been conducting instruction having an audience represented by students, who are expected to believe what the teachers states unquestionably, and learn to do this the way the teacher does them.

New currents in language teaching ambition students to question the messages of the teachers, to bend and twist the information in order to agree or disagree with it after it has been understood, taking a more participative role than that of mere listeners. By questioning, students are forming their own knowledge according to their view of things, not imitating that of anyone else.

Carbonara (2005: 56) explains how, according to Ronald Hyman, for every 38 teacher questions in a typical classroom, there is only one student question. If we pose questions that require fresh thought, our students must make answers, not gather them.

This does not equal teachers being less knowledgeable or holding less authority, what it means is that teachers are now accompanied by other sources of information, being them contemplated and introduced by the teachers themselves, who work as both educators and providers at the same time.

Teachers are now resource providers for the students to learn autonomously, enabling multidirectional communication instead of the traditional one-way code from teachers to students. A teacher being one of many instructing possibilities, instead of being the only one, comes along with schools being one of many sources of information instead of the only one.

> Schools are no longer the only valid stream of information because students nowadays are provided with information coming from many different sources outside school, so schools are turning into channeling institutions teaching students not only contents but also proper learning habits and strategies.
>
> Cal (2005: 156)

This renewal has been made possible due to the arousal of new sources of information brought by new technologies, especially the internet, which allows students to contrast the information received at school.

Verifying and contrasting the acquired contents puts students a step closer from questioning them, which is something new since traditional schooling placed textbooks and

teachers as the only sources of knowledge for a student to consider, making their messages unquestionable for their recipients. The multiplication of sources of knowledge widens the spectrum for students, who are now capable of rapidly consulting these out of school sources testing reliability of what they got taught, questioning it as a result and enriching their learning experience through it.

The implementation of new technologies through education is not considered as a path leading towards the substitution of teachers by computers. It never has and it never will be, because computers being introduced in schools ambitions to represent a helping tool for teachers to utilize, to better accomplish their mission, not to intrude in the process.

Computers are not to be seen as a disruptive element of education, but as an auxiliary one, empowering teaching whenever possible. They are not proposed as substitutes for teachers but rather as supporting devices for their explanations, classroom management and tutoring, being the latter the only area where deep self-sufficiency could be developed.

Nowadays, the teaching community has realized how picking the channel of instruction is almost as important as the teaching process itself, because of the wide variety of channel available now, which keep growing exponentially along with the development of new technologies, and also because of the effect these channels have on the attitude of students towards what they are taught.

Teaching countless ideas to students does not function as well as teaching a few ideas in an innovative way, building better foundations to later erect better roofs upon. In fact, Carbonara (2005: 57) explains how some scholars have observed that as information doubles, knowledge halves and wisdom quarters because of a lack of deep processing level of learning.

8.1 Classic methodologies

Those methodologies first used in language teaching have been labeled as classic methodologies. Among them, the most acclaimed methods were Grammar-Translation, Reform Movement and Direct Method.

Every single classic methodology was planned attending to the needs and demands of their time, so they are all based on rigid systematizations focused on drills which took literature as a referent over reality.

As pointed out by Widdowson (1978: 74), many of the difficulties that learners have had in the past derive directly from the teaching that has been imposed upon them, representing language as a set of formal elements to be manifested and apprehended by means of linguistic skills outside a real communicative purpose.

Following suit with their purpose, classic methodologies made no use of images whatsoever, since written texts where the most recurrent items used while instructing languages, followed by oral texts depending on the specific classic methodology we look back at. Nowadays, multimedia is considered essential when studying a language, because it has proven itself useful at mimicking authentic real life situations, involving all the senses of the students to achieve an integral approach.

For most people the left hemisphere is the one that produces words, and the right hemisphere, by contrast, deals in whole images. Traditional methods in education have fed the left half of the brain much more than they have fed the right, and have also made their greatest demands on the left hemisphere (Stevick, 1982: 31).

Had there existed the technology presently developed in the times of the classic methodologies, they would have never existed as we know them. That being said, it is also true that classic methodologies met their purposes and, since they did not know them, people did not experience the need of the usage of new technologies to acquire new languages.

> Back in the traditional teaching days, automatic and mechanic procedures were prioritized over creative and communicative ones when teaching languages because at that time, technologies allowing real interaction such as computer assisted video activities and software offering the capability of voice recognition were lacking.
>
> Arconada (2002: 72)

8.1.1 Grammar-Translation

Grammar-Translation was a classic method created to teach Latin and Greek languages in Europe along the 18th and 19th centuries, since secondary students ambitioned accessing Latin and Greek written literature.

The grammar-translation method was devised and developed for use in secondary schools. The earliest grammar-translation course for the teaching of English was written in 1793 by Johann Christian Fick and published in Erlangen in south Germany (Howatt, 1984: 131).

The grammar-translation methodology was based on reading and translating, undermining the oral aspect of the languages. It is a deductive method because grammar rules are

studied decontextualized, before studying any specific example of their application, to later analyze written texts to identify and study the rules already acquired.

The presentation of language through reading passages aims at consolidating knowledge of structure and vocabulary that has already been introduced and at extending this knowledge by incorporating into the passages examples of whatever elements of usage come next in the course. The effectiveness of passages of this kind as a means of manifesting a restricted set of elements from the language system is achieved at the expense of a normal realization of the system as use, as pointed out by Widdowson (1978: 78).

This methodology was based on the faculty psychology theory, which stated that body and mind were apart. Mind was thought to be divided in will, emotion and intellect, being the latter capable of being trained using mathematics and classic Greek and Roman literature aiming at controlling both will and emotion.

When applied into classroom situations, students were to memorize never-ending vocabulary lists and decontextualized grammar rules in order to properly analyze sentences, deconstructing and translating them, prioritizing compositions and concretion, and making constant use of L1 for instruction.

The main aspects criticized about this methodology were its lack of interaction and oral elements, and the fact of being best utilized to teach case based languages. Despite the aforementioned critics, Grammar-Translation was a commonly used method until Direct Method took over in 1960.

According to Finocchiaro (1983: 5), since Latin is not spoken in everyday communication, the analysis of Latin and the grammar-translation method, ignore authentic spoken

communication and the social variation of language which goes with it, and concerns itself primarily with the written language of classical literature. Translation was a particularly important device when much international communication was conducted through written Latin, but when used as the main procedure for teaching spoken languages, it led to too much concentration on the written, and particularly literary, forms and too little on natural speech.

8.1.2 Reform movement

Reform Movement began with the publication of the pamphlet "Teaching must start afresh" by Viëtor, a phonetician who designed a new methodology opposing Grammar-Translation, with the help of the International Phonetic Association.

Unlike many examples of educational change, the Reform Movement began suddenly, with the publication of Viëtor´s pamphlet *Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren!* (Language teaching must start afresh!) under the pseudonym Quosque Tandem in 1882 (Howatt, 1984: 170). Its impact on the teaching profession at the time, and its later influence, make it one of the most significant documents in recent language teaching history.

The Reform Movement represented the union of the interests of phoneticians and teachers, who decided to work together towards the creation of a new methodology based on phonetics. Under that idea, renowned phoneticians of the time such as Viëtor, Passy and Jespersen, came to collaborate with the cause making an extraordinary team of excelling phoneticians who also were former teachers.

The Reform Movement was a remarkable display of international and interdisciplinary co-operation in which the specialist phoneticians took as much interest in the classroom as the teachers did in the new science of phonetics. Howatt (1984: 168) believes that one of the reasons for this was the fact that three out of the four principal phoneticians – Viëtor in Germany, Passy in France, and Jespersen in Denmark – began their careers as schoolteachers.

Reform Movement had the oral aspect of the language as its main target, studying phonetics to improve the pronunciation of the students. Thus, L2 gradually took over L1 as the language of instruction.

Howatt (1984: 171) claims that the Reform Movement was founded on three basic principles: the primacy of speech, the centrality of the connected text as the kernel of the teaching-learning process, and the absolute priority of an oral methodology in the classroom.

It also included a smart solution for studying grammar, utilizing songs to emphasize the phonetic aspect of language while reviewing grammar contents of it, plus adding the engaging benefits of teaching through music.

> Using songs in the ESL classroom can be both enjoyable and educational.
>
> Celce-Murcia (1979: 49)

Using songs to study grammar was a revolutionary step at the time, and it has been used ever since, proving itself as a powerful tool regarding teaching in general and language teaching in particular. Other than grammar, numerous aspects of the language acquisition are eligible to be taught implementing the use of songs and music, because of the engaging effect it has on the students, clearly easing the learning process. According to Celce-Murcia (1979: 49), songs can

be used as a useful aid in the learning of vocabulary, pronunciation, structures, sentence patterns or even aspects of culture.

The benefits of using songs to teach languages is especially useful when teaching children, who feel themselves relentlessly attracted to music since they relate it to playing games and having fun, and there is no better way of learning that making teaching fun.

> The implementation of songs when teaching children, also helps teachers fight against the problem posed by how short their attention span is, since for the most part music seems to trick kids into extending that period of instructional acceptance. In that sense, few instructors would question the value of using songs and games when teaching ESL to children.
>
> Celce-Murcia (1979: 49)

The study of phonetics to improve pronunciation helps students memorize contents the same way songs do. By sounding words out to work on pronunciation, the assimilation of the written aspect of the word is implemented indirectly, accelerating the retention of new words as part of the vocabulary of specific students. Sounding is an aid in learning words permanently, because sounding out a word strengthens retention of the visual form.

Current teaching methods keep recurring to pronouncing words as a way of acquiring them as new vocabulary items, as we can see when we look at sight-words listings in Elementary Schools, where students try to sound out words as whole unitary elements by visual recognition, as opposed to sounding the letters in a word.

> Pronouncing words is an aid in learning to recognize them in print because the familiar clang associations of the words heard and spoken establish a link with meaning.
>
> Hildreth (1958: 131)

8.1.3 Direct Method

Direct method uses L2 as the only instructional language, implementing mimicking and the use of flashcards and other objects to avoid reverting to L1. This is a very intuitive method which defends the idea of every human being having an inner and uncanny capability of learning languages. That is why this method was also called natural method, since it tries to imitate the way we first learn our mother tongue.

Direct Method tries to have rules discovered by students in an inductive way, observing examples to extract rules from them instead of having them laid out from the very beginning. This method highlights the importance of the oral aspect of the language, including pronunciation, using patterns based on questions and answers in small groups of students, where the role of the teacher is vital. Thus, Direct Method would locate itself opposed to Grammar-Translation, the same way Reform Movement did.

To better explain grammar aspects of the language without utilizing L1, the method leaned on visual aids to elicit what was being explained having the target language as the instruction language at the very same time.

> Tape recorders, film strips, flannelboards and other pictorial devices were designed to teach carefully graded structures in specific linguistic contexts and social situations which would clarify their use.
>
> Finocchiaro (1983: 8)

Montaigne was one the founders of this methodology, being himself sent by his father to live with a family of Latin speaking peasants for three years prior to learning any other language, to be finally taken back by his family as a linguistic experiment that probably made him consider the basics of the experience when founding this new methodology.

The direct method provided the chance for intensive immersion in the second language and tried to emphasize effective language use rather than the intellectual analysis characteristic of grammar-translation.

Direct Method has received critics because of the absence of translation activities due to the strict use of L2, and because of grammar rules being inferred instead of being initially explained by the teacher. Other negative aspect seen when analyzing this methodology rests upon the excessive amount of time needed for good results to appear.

It has also been criticized because when pronunciation becomes more important than the meaning of what is uttered, the utility of the method for daily purposes fall short from properly conveying information, and it only meets an aesthetic purpose.

"Mimicry and memorization of the dialog" became the slogan for too many years, perfect pronunciation was sought often at the expense of anything else, and lexical meaning was considered unimportant. Learners parroted incomprehensible material, reading was deferred, the

study of grammar was banned in many school systems, and pattern practice drills were the main activities of the lesson, as explained by Finocchiaro (1983: 7).

8.2 20TH Century Methodologies

Among the many innovations from the 20th century in terms of teaching methodologies, it is safe to state that Berlitz School, BASIC English, Structuralism and Transformational Generative Grammar clearly stand out.

8.2.1 Basic English

Basic English was created having in mind the idea of people using a limited part of what is included in the vast systems we call languages. Learning the core of new languages would seem more practical and preferable to targeting the whole system. In fact, Willis (1999: vi) explains how "around 70% of the English we speak and hear, read and write is made up of the 700 commonest words in the language".

Despite that idea being based on facts, it is also true that mastering a language requires more knowledge than what is expressed in any situation. Selecting the part of the system to best fit the demands of the situation in a hypothetical linguistic usage should not be compared to being only capable of using a preselected part of it. In this sense, and referring back to Willis (1990: 39) again, "an educated native speaker of English is likely to have a vocabulary of some 50,000 words".

Basic English really stands for British American Scientific International Commercial English, the original name of this methodology. It was especially used in Asia, where it was viewed as an international auxiliary language capable of helping ESL teaching.

> Basic English is not merely a simplified form of English but a language in its own right, a rival to Esperanto or Jespersen´s Novial or any of the other artificial languages which were proposed as a means of international communication in a divided world, and which attracted the idealism of the post-war generation with particular strength.
>
> Howatt (1984: 251)

BASIC English was created by Odgen in an attempt to reduce a language down to 850 basic words, and reducing the grammar rules to the smallest number necessary for the clear statement of ideas along with it, being this done without change in the normal order and behavior of these words in everyday English, so that learning a language could be easier and faster.

Even though Basic English not only ambitioned representing a new and easier way of learning a language, but it also was centered on it, it has been criticized as a learning method because learning a part of a language does not equal learning a language.

Odgen´s repeated claim that BASIC could be learnt “in a week or at worst a month” was, to put it mildly, disingenuous. What he meant, of course, was that a learner could memorize the 850 words and the list of rules in the stipulated period of time. This is not the same as learning BASIC or any other language, as stated by Howatt (1984: 253).

Odgen had Richards as his associate, who led the promotion of the methodology mainly throughout Chinese schools. Richards also created what he called Simplified English, being it a variation of BASIC English oriented towards the writing of technical manuals.

The 850 words contained in this reduced version of a language were thought to enable communication in common daily situations, but they were not selected to successfully communicate at work related scenarios. An extension of 150 additional words, containing 100 words generically related to the chosen field of work and 50 words specifically chosen for each profession, was created for that purpose, reaching a total corpus of 100 words needed to communicate both at work and in common daily situations.

BASIC English has been criticized because only 18 out of the initial corpus of 850 words are verbs, labeled as operators by Odgen, as well as the need of constantly paraphrasing to properly express an idea with the shortest corpus possible. Every word ended up adopting too many meanings and educators had to learn BASIC English before teaching it.

Its 850 words are divided into three main classes. There are six hundred names of things, one hundred and fifty names of qualities (adjectives) and one hundred “operations”, as Odgen calls them: words that put the others into significant relationship with one another (Willis, 1990: 24).

H. G. Wells, in his book “The shape of things to come”, mentions BASIC English defining it as the lingua franca of an elite who creates a totalitarian worldwide government known by every human being.

This shows how popular Basic English became at a given time, especially in a post-war environment that feared universalization.

8.2.2 Berlitz School

Berlitz School began when Maximilian Berlitz migrated from Germany to the United States of America to teach languages in 1878, settling down in Rhode Island although nowadays its headquarters are located in Princeton.

Maximilian Berlitz needed help to teach French, so he hired an assistant called Joly who spoke no English and this worried Berlitz enormously. Once Maximilian got sick and Joly took the teaching over, even though Berlitz feared receiving numerous complaints regarding the lack of the English knowledge of the new teacher. On the contrary, students seemed to have advanced even faster due to the usage of French as the language of instruction, enlightening Berlitz who decided to refurbish his methodology having L2 as the vehicular language.

Presently, the number of Berlitz Schools tops 400 over more than 70 countries, and the students are divided according to their previous knowledge of L2 in ten categories, pairing up to create five levels: functional, intermediate, upper-intermediate, advanced and professional or native. After taking a diagnostic test, the student gets enrolled in the adequate level according to the score.

It has been criticized because of its excessive use of the oral aspect, its lack of focus on grammar, and its late adaptation to the usage of new technologies. Despite that being true,

nowadays Berlitz School is the methodology of choice in companies such as IBM, Daimler, Siemens or Caterpillar.

8.2.3 Behaviorism

Structuralism sees a whole as a complex system of interrelated parts. Regarding languages teaching, it states than prior to studying the language, a team of professionals is to study it and produce adequate material for that purpose.

It is based on Behaviorism, where students learn following a stimulus and response pattern using drills focused on constant mechanic repetition followed by immediate correction in case a mistake appears. Radio recordings are also considered useful by this methodology.

Chomsky (1968: 63) explains how the theory of learning has limited itself to a narrow and surely inadequate concept of what is learned – namely a system of stimulus-response connections, a network of associations, a repertoire of behavioral items, a habit hierarchy, or a system of dispositions to respond in a particular way under specifiable stimulus conditions.

The referential theory of meaning states that the meaning of a word is its referent. The behavioral theory of meaning states, taking the definition emitted by Ede (1980: 42), that the meaning of a word or expression is the set of responses that it produces in the hearer.

Skinner is linked with structuralism because of his consideration of languages being learnt by means of acquiring the correct habits. This interrelates with the repetitive drilling, based on stimulus and response, which structuralism utilizes in order to automatize linguistic responses.

The aspect of Skinner´s work which was associated most strongly with the structural approach was the view of language learning as a habit formation. It was held that the patterns of the language, as defined by structural linguistics, needed to be "over-learned" by students so that they would be produced correctly as a matter of unconscious habit, as noted by Finocchiaro (1983: 6).

The most successful application of Structuralism was the so-called Army Specialized Training Program, used on American soldiers in times of World War II. It is based on intensive learning, with reduced groups of students who already had some L2 notions. New technologies were applied and teachers were native, but the real key factor was the high level of motivation soldiers had.

> The success of the Army method in achieving its objectives can be attributed to a number of intrinsic and extrinsic features: carefully selected students, highly motivated students, common housing, small classes, many contact hours, native-speaking or bilingual teachers, a generous supply of teaching aids, a nontechnical approach to phonology, with English as a reference point, area study relating the target language and the culture of its speech community to the students' culture.
>
> Wertheimer (1964: 3)

The symbol representing ASTP was an octagonal patch having the lamp of wisdom pierced by the sword of bravery on a yellow background, symbolizing both physical and psychical aptitudes. There was also a musical called "Take it easy" which dealt with ASTP.

When ASTP was to be brought to schools, it failed due to the lack of motivation students had and the increment in the number of students per group.

The ASTP ran for approximately nine months from April 1943 and, according to Howatt (1984: 267), involved about 15,000 servicemen (carefully selected ex-college students) following courses in twenty-seven different languages. Separate establishments called Civil Affairs Training Schools (CATS) were set up to provide language instruction for the officers, a project that proved particularly fruitful.

Structuralism has been criticized because of its vision of languages as constant repetitions, not taking into consideration the creative aspect of languages.

8.2.4 Transformational generative grammar

Transformational generative grammar appeared as a counterfeit for Structuralism, having Chomsky as its main representative, and defending the existence of the inner universal grammar, with linguistic universals, which are essential to achieve competence. In fact, quoting Chomsky 1968: 30) himself, "generative grammar follows the tradition in attempting to account for competence".

Chomsky (1966: 12) stated that by implementing rules, TGG was capable of predicting any combination of words creating grammatical sentences by relating signals to the semantic interpretations of these signals, instead of studying each case individually.

Chomsky also talked about Language Acquisition Device, which allowed us to learn L2 through hypothesis building, the same way children learn L1. This is part of the nativist theory, which states that children are capable of acquiring L1 by building hypothesis for as long as LAD remains active, due to their constant exposure to L1 parents put them through.

Stages of the language being studied should be carefully monitored by teachers so that they are not too far ahead of the capabilities of students at any given time, because unless they are monitored, the input could overcome the comprehension of the students, ending up being out of what is called comprehensible input. At this point is worth mentioning the term coined as safety level, being it that level at which the student has learned something new but has not yet overlearned it.

The input hypothesis claims that humans acquire language in only one way – by understanding messages, or by receiving "comprehensible input", as explained by Krashen (1985: 2).

The more learners practice and study a language, the better understanding they have of the language, improving their readiness to face different input stages.

According to Krashen (1985: 34), classroom input can certainly be made more comprehensible by active participation, but the results of immersion and sheltered language-teaching studies suggest that such situations provide comprehensible input for all students.

Cognitivism is the application of TGG into language teaching, which prioritizes free expression and creativity, considering mistakes as necessary and understandable parts of learning, since they prove hypothesis are being build.

Hypothesizing about the target language is a valid tool for a learner to discard or corroborate communicative options, since referring to Muñoz (2000: 210), the response of the receiver to the aforementioned hypothesis could help them being evaluated by the emitter depending on how communicative rupturing they might prove themselves.

Krashen has been the most relevant Cognitivism representative, studying the comparison between L2 learning on adults and L1 learning on children. He researched on LAD and analyzed the logical order followed by grammar rules processing.

Krashen distinguished acquisition from learning, since acquisition would be the unconscious mechanism of language interiorizing given in communicative situations, whereas learning would respond to rules and grammatical information processing.

He also talked about the affective filter, being it the way the motivation of a student functions as a filter between himself and the learning contents, being this filter necessary to acquire a language. Quoting Krashen (1985: 3), the affective filter would be "a mental block that prevents acquirers from fully utilizing the comprehensible input they receive for language acquisition".

Cognitivism has been criticized because its terminology is abstract and its application is superficial, being considered a theoretic methodology.

8.3 Communicative Methodologies

Among the many present methodologies, both Notional-Functional and Communicative methodologies do stand out.

8.3.1 Notional-Functional

Notional-Functional states that a notion is the specific context where people communicate, whereas function is the specific purpose a speaker has in a given context.

More than a methodology in itself, it is a way of organizing a language learning curriculum, with functions and notions as its base to represent universal categories of human thinking.

It is based on language use, with language usage in specific situations being learnt, helping students communicate in a real life context.

Grammar stops being used to rule a language, and the division of its components in functions and notions is what establishes the different categories of any given linguistic system, being functions related with the objective of an emission and notions with its communication.

In this sense Finocchiaro (1983: 12) explains how a language was much more appropriately classified in terms of what people wanted to do with the language (functions) or in terms of what meanings people wanted to convey (notions) than in terms of the grammatical items as in traditional language teaching models.

This methodology shares some aspects with the communicative approach, especially regarding the importance of communicating an idea seen as the main goal of uttering words. The aim of the message would be considered more important than the message itself.

A functional-notional approach to language learning places major emphasis on the communicative purpose of a speech act. It focuses on what people want to do or what they want to accomplish through speech.

8.3.2 Communicative approach

Communicative methodology emphasizes interaction, trying to make students master the four basic communicative skills in order to achieve communicative competence.

Communicative approach does not only include the study of the use of the language in communicative settings, but also the study of the language itself, but it does so in an integral way. Thus, once students are capable of mastering the language and its usage in different situations, they have developed great communicative competence along with great knowledge about the language itself.

Communicative competence is the result of the fusion of formal and instrumental knowledge, as defined by Estaire (1994: 77). These two dimensions of knowing a language are not constructed separately but in a global, interrelated way. The key to successful learning is to find ways of weaving together formal and instrumental knowledge.

The main reason to promote integral learning including both the language as a system and its utilization in real life situations is the fact that, whenever the code is the only aspect studied, authenticity and communicative competence are not achieved.

Focusing only on the interactive part of a language, not committing to the study of the code itself, leaves students with too many deficiencies to be corrected by the natural

understanding of the system happening while using it for communicating. Because of it, the learning process loses accuracy and more time is required to achieve less compensated results.

> Genuine language is a two-sided combination of form and meaning, and we should therefore minimize the occasions when students look at the form alone.
>
> (Stevick, E. 1982, p.76)

The communicative methodology, by exposing learners to the language and its use at the same time, ambitions students to understand the way the language functions by inferring it from the many practical communicative situations implemented. Thus, the communicative methodology is holistic in that it relies on the ability of learners to abstract from the language to which they are exposed, in order to recreate a picture of the target language.

Whenever a language student under the communicative method instruction identifies a previously unknown feature of the target language, or corrects a previously identified one, by putting the language into practice through interaction, the inner processing of that language rebuilds according to the new information obtained (Muñoz, 2000: 210). And this happens constantly when we use the target language as a communicating tool, providing students with constant valuable data input to better understand the system and its usage.

Nunan promotes the use of authentic material as a reality check and as an engaging factor, applying personal experiences to learning. Activities to be used here would include role play activities, quiz activities and information gap activities.

Authentic material, which is not originally created to teach a language but to daily life activities for native speakers, is to be implemented in communicative language teaching because

of obviously representing real life situations, enabling students to apply their innate faculties to recreate language systems.

Simulations are combined with the authentic material to recreate interaction scenes from the real world, instead of using a more artificial fabricated material disguised as authentic one. This is essential due to the fact that some students are not exposed to the target language anywhere but in class, so interactive activities included in the communicative approach are the only interaction they experience in the target language, which is necessary to acquire communicative competence.

According to Estaire (1994: 86), for the millions of students in contexts where the English classroom is the only place where they can use English, classroom communication tasks are the only possible way to develop instrumental knowledge which is essential for communicative competence.

Simulating works great with language learners because they can test their communicative skills with a partner. IT has also been used to accent simulations making them include more senses in the process, to round it up in an integral global activity.

Simulation has been applied to language teaching longer than new technologies so it does not depend on them, but it could benefit from their support. In fact, IT implemented simulations of real life communicative scenarios can be tailored to better fit the needs of specific students, pre-programming the communicative interactions to exploit those parts of the language the students need to practice the most.

Experiencing real life simulations through IT enables students to practice what they learn, acknowledging what their weak points are to better understand their needs, encouraging them to research on specific improvable areas of their language.

Throughout the communicative activities between students, unless communication breaks, teachers are not to stop interaction from continuing because of mistakes arousing, since mistakes are vital for students to learn from and readjust their conception of the language by constant hypothesizing. Also, the communicative flow could be damaged by corrective interruptions, being the activities less fruitful.

The teacher is a facilitator when creating an environment in which learning can take place, where linguistic expertise is required only in the event of communication breakdown, as noted by Mackay (1989: 51).

8.4 Modern methodologies

Among the many post-communicative methodologies, the NLP, the task-based approach, the lexic approach, the audio-lingual method, MALL and CALL, Tandem language learning, Total Physical Response and the silent way are worth highlighting because of standing out.

8.4.1 Tandem

Tandem Language Learning focuses on paired language learning, where each couple component is native in the L2 targeted by the other partner.

Solidarity is the base of this method, where help is given and received at the same time. Students feel appreciation towards their partners because of their willingness to help them out, so teaching and learning occur surrounded by that immense engaging factor, which eases success attainability.

When this methodology is implemented via Internet, it is called e-Tandem, and new doors open via this channel. Here, Tandem is ready to expand beyond oral communication, which is the basic aspect of traditional tandem, and make use of writing abilities through electronic mail correspondence between the learners. Internet also enables tandem to break up paired structures and free the helping flow, being possible to interact with different partners at the same time, or choose a new one at any given time.

Levy (1997: 32) explains how the International Email Tandem Network, begun in 1993 by Helmut Brammerts, is described as language learning by computer mediated communication using the Internet. In the Tandem Network, universities from around the world are linked together to enable students to learn languages in tandem via email on a reciprocal basis.

8.4.2 Task-based approach

Task-based approach centers in tasks assigned to students, the sessions gravitate around. Tasks are based on real situations and are to be previously explained, developed and analyzed.

It is a very student-centered approach, and it is highly recommended for beginners, who benefit from the deep coverage of single tasks as opposed to rapid advances of other methodologies which avoid paused learning itineraries.

Taking Estaire (1994: 12), in task based learning (TBL) the basic and initial point of organization is the TASK; classwork is organized as a sequence of tasks, and it is tasks that generate the language to be used, not vice versa.

Since students are given tasks to develop after being explained and before being analyzed, the period of time when students work independently provides teachers with the opportunity of monitoring students and assess the success of the activity in progress.

A large proportion of task based work within a unit is not dependent on teachers being at the front of the classroom. This allows teachers much more freedom of movement in the classroom and gives them the opportunity to monitor students´ work, concentrating on observing what is happening in the classroom.

8.4.3 Lexical approach

Lexical approach focuses on the belief of learning seen as understanding and producing lexical sentences as fixed sentences with a high frequency of use (multi-word prefabricated chunks).

It gives more importance to vocabulary than it does to grammar, which makes the method more approachable and appealing to students that it would be otherwise, because of the reluctant effect grammar has on some learners.

A description of language which takes the words as its starting point, according to Willis (1990: 27), offers more powerful generalizations and is more accessible to learners than a structural description.

8.4.4 MALL & CALL

MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) uses mobile technologies such as MP3, PDA or cell phones to learn languages.

CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) would be a variation of MALL which makes use of computers. Despite being a recently developed approached, it has been evolving along with the constant invention of new technologically advanced devices which outperform their predecessors.

In 1980 cell phones began being used as assistance to language learning. In 1990, the University of Hawaii offered a remote English course by using phones and computers.

More recently, teleconferencing has also been utilized. The University of Madison used wireless handheld computers, and the University of Duke handed recording accessorized iPods to students. The University of Stanford used cell phones in the foreign languages lab to teach Spanish, and the City College of Southampton went farther creating a website with SMS and MMS messaging service, on top of lending cell phones accessorized with video and audio recording to its ESL students.

Presently, tablet PCs and smartphones are also used, and collaborative learning is implemented by learning in groups.

In the past, classical methodologies did not contemplate computing for obvious reasons, but from the moment they were available to educators, they have played a key role in language teaching because of the possibilities they bring to the table. To prove this, it would suffice thinking of how feasible language teaching would be nowadays without the implementation of any IT based application.

From the integration of language laboratories in education in the 1960s, and the development of the CALL methodology, which stands out for its engaging power and its interaction and multimedia related capabilities, referring to Loyo (2005: 51), computers have become inherent to language learning.

Given that language teaching and its methodologies are living entities which constantly reinvent themselves changing their shapes, CALL is obviously obliged to follow suit by being one part of the process. CALL does not only refer to the origins of computing in language learning, but also to the never-ending studies of better applications of it.

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is defined as the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning. In ten years, CALL went from an experiment conducted by the University of Illinois, to a solid system providing numerous hours of teaching including a wide array of languages.

Levy (1997: 17) explains how CALL may be said to have begun with the PLATO (Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations) Project which was initiated at the University of Illinois in 1960. By the end of the 1970s PLATO had clearly proved itself, with the

system delivering 50,000 student hours of language instruction in a dozen of languages, plus 50,000 hours in other curricula.

Computing can also associate with other media channels to feed off each other and construct a mixture to better fit a specific demand or goal. That is the case of television, which combines with computing when teaching languages to emphasize the multimedia aspect offered by both fields to present it to students.

TICCIT is an acronym for Time-Shared, Interactive, Computer Controlled Information Television and the project was initiated in 1971 at Brigham Young University. This system combined television technology with the computer. With its capacity to combine text, audio, and video, TICCIT was perhaps the first example of multimedia Computer Assisted Instruction according to Levy (1997: 18).

Much earlier had schools began using television as an instructing tool, since according to Lamb (1967: 58), the Associated Rediffusion Ltd. began developing school oriented televised programs in London back in 1957, and by that time, around thirty educational TV stations were already up and running in the United States of America.

8.4.5 Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response (TPR) is based in the belief of the existence of hearing and understanding phases before reaching production.

The students are to respond to commands by means of physical reactions, the same way a child would react to orders without an oral production accompanying a physical response.

It is only appropriate for beginners and it represents an added difficulty for shy students, but it also functions especially well with dyslexic students and also with hyperactive students who are in constant need of movement.

8.4.6 Neuro-Linguistic Program

Neuro Linguistic Program (NLP) is a recent trend which promotes the benefit of understanding the thinking processing of the brain. It believes in the connection between neurologic processing and language.

A student from the university of California in Santa Cruz, while researching, found out the existence of certain sentences that, when uttered by the therapist in therapeutic Gestalt recording sessions, eased the acceptance of the patient towards the suggestions made by the therapist.

After presenting the information to Grinder, research supervisor of the student, they both studied and developed it together to later sue each other for the rights held on the methodology.

Learning would be more fruitful while in relaxation, state achieved by means of songs which remind students of their childhood, friendship agreements and advising instead of commanding.

8.4.7 Audio-lingual approach

Audio-lingual method focuses on improving through reinforcement, placing itself next to the Direct method and away from the communicative approach.

The audio-lingual method is characterized by intensive drill in speaking and listening through dialogues which are memorized and pattern drills which are learned by the students, as explained by Wertheimer (1964: 5).

L2 is utilized to develop grammar drills, with the teacher introducing a structure to the students, who are to repeat it and vary it by implementing new vocabulary.

It shares with the Direct method the constant usage of L2, even for instruction related matters, trying to avoid the usage of L1 by eliciting both orally and physically. The fact of grammar drills being practiced separates the Audio-lingual method from the communicative approach, because drills are barely communicative in their functions.

8.4.8 The silent way

This methodology promotes the autonomy, independence and responsibility of the learning process by using rods and charts, with associations of colors and sounds, while the teacher remains silent eliciting answers by waving the aforementioned tools in the air.

In order to preserve the spirit of the approach, students are to correctly answer to the visual prompts emitted by the teacher, who refrains from correcting the students by speaking out loud and tries to orientate them by repeating and emphasizing the signs in an eliciting way.

The silent way has proven to be especially useful when instructing students experiencing especial learning difficulties, because of the engaging effect of both rods and charts, and the singular instruction lacking auditory commands which would endanger the active participation of certain students.

The competence and expertise of the teacher is vital to properly implement this method, because of the specifics of it, which extends the idea of learning as a game instead of a mandatory activity.

The silence of the instructor dims the role of the teacher and empowers the role of students, deriving most of the importance of the success on the materials used, which stop representing the objective and start representing a channel enabling performance.

According to Gattegno (1963: 89), the Silent Way is but a way. It is not structural or a linguistic or a direct method of teaching languages. In the hands of expert teachers the materials would lose their predominance, the teacher his dominant role, the language its appearance as the target. Instead, everything and everybody serves one aim, to make everyone into the most competent learner.

9. GUIDED READING

Listening comprehension is, without a doubt, the most important skill in learning a new language. Understanding a language is a prerequisite to speaking, reading, and writing that language. Commercial or teacher-made tapes accompanied by written texts can provide preliterate students with opportunities to hear their new language and see the written words that they are hearing.

The development of reading activities will also help learners reinforce listening and speaking abilities, and according to Krashen (1985: 34), there is good evidence that self-motivated reading causes acquisition of the written dialect in the native language.

In order to successfully teach bilingual students at their early stages how to read and write both in English and Spanish, most schools running bilingual transitional programs make use of a reading technique called Guided Reading. Through such instruction educators can meet the diverse needs of their readers as these programs allow for differentiated reading lessons.

This process begins with educators first assessing their students' reading abilities. Educators need to assess students in order to group them appropriately. This is done using running records.

> Data in the areas of reading fluency, accuracy, and comprehension need to be gathered on each student to allow educators to first discover the needs of each learner and to then develop approaches and instruction to ultimately improve student performance.
>
> Fountas & Pinnell (1996)

Assessing fluency, accuracy, and comprehension will often provide insight as to whether a text is too easy or too difficult. Recognizing such factors aids educators in discovering when to reassess and move a student to a different group where individual needs will be best met.

As it is complicated to address every student as wished while teaching reading and writing at elementary school, specially taking into account the ratio of students per teacher and the amount of attention they all require at the same time, Guided Reading is being utilized to isolate a small group of students from the rest of the group, so that we can focus on them regarding their reading and writing, sitting in a round table along with the teacher, while monitoring the rest of the group using work stations called learning centers.

> While it may be true that a good teacher can make almost any set of reading materials work in class, it is obvious that properly conceived reading exercises free the teacher to work more efficiently with students to solve individual reading problems.
>
> (Mackay, 1989: 52)

The reading center, being only one of many other possible centers, is the one that every other center is set up to enable. Teachers utilize graded reading books that go from A to Z as difficulty and the number of words increase. These books are appealing to the reader and, at the very easy ones, teachers and students may even use Rubbermaid fake monster or witch fingers to point at the words on the book, which are very limited in number and find themselves accompanied by large pictures, making it fun for the kids to engage into reading. In fact, according to Hildreth (1958: 87), learning to read begins with story telling and picture-book reading, which furnish practice in the language patterns of reading and accustom the child to the use of books.

From kindergarten to second grade, both monolingual and bilingual students are tested on sight words, being them a set of three hundred words that are to be visually recognizable by the students. Teachers find that children in the second and third grades learn to read, write, and spell more easily with the aid of a picture dictionary, as noted by Hildreth (1958: 332).

Among the words chosen to make up the text printed on graded reading books, sight words have to appear systematically so that students get familiarized with them making them recognizable at first sight. Samuel Ball (1970: 14) explains how Comenius himself theorized about children learning better after associating words with their graphic representations.

Words that are successfully recognized by the student through testing, get crossed out and not presented again before the eyes of that specific student, narrowing the attention into the sight words still to be recognized or acquired until the whole set is accomplished.

Sight words are also gradually posted on word walls as they are presented to the students, so that they are surrounded by them and capable of better memorizing them even without noticing it, through visual recognition and retention. When selecting words to be posted, categorizing them should be given some thought since, according to Kess (1992: 87), the morphological characteristics of words appear to influence the visual word recognition process.

Beginner books contain basically patterns with repetitions of basic sight words printed in big lettering and accompanied by big and appealing illustrations, always related to the meaning of the sight words underneath them. As difficulty rises, the lettering size gets reduced and the amount of sight words per page goes up high, taking space from the also reduced illustrations.

> Image applied language teaching is especially functional when extensive use of L2 is demanded, since images accompanying words eases comprehension and prevents translation, avoiding ambiguity while comprehending. Images have to adapt to the psychological and perceptive level of the students though.
>
> Decaigny (1974: 48).

Writing is implemented right after reading the book and still as part of the learning center, asking the students to write down some of the sight words from the text they just read. It is even possible to work on the spelling as we ask the readers to spell out the words they were asked to write down on dry erase whiteboards. Possibilities are virtually never-ending through guided reading. There are many advantages in linking reading instruction with all aspects of linguistic expression, as appreciated by Hildreth (1958: 19).

In an attempt to measure literacy, each grade level establishes benchmarks regarding optimum reading levels for the students so that reading and writing capabilities could be qualified in the report cards depending on the benchmarks being met, exceeded or not reached. As Wells (1981: 253) points out, the use of the term literacy implies that both reading and writing are equivalent in their consequences for cognitive functioning.

Ideally, guided reading groups should not include more than six students at a time and three reading groups should be met by the teacher on a daily basis, so that the whole reading time slot gets taken profit from. Supporting this view is the fact that a survey of 3,000 educators who implemented guided reading found these groups may consist of up to six students, meeting about three times a week for a duration of about 20 minutes each time, as explained by Ford & Opitz (2008).

Teachers should sit down surrounded by readers but also facing the rest of the classroom at all time. Thus, both the seat used by the teacher in the guided reading round table and the location of the table itself are not random since they are vital for the success of classroom management.

The rest of the group is to be scattered in different learning stations where worksheets would be already set up so that students could accomplish autonomous working. Learning stations should contain work on core areas of the curriculum, embracing the subjects of choice.

A schedule is also necessary for the success of the activity, being the most common way to arrange it a pocket chart with the daily or even weekly schedule, indicating at least learning centers, groups and times. Through time, students get so familiarized with the system that it becomes automatic and really profitable once autonomous work is reached.

Although the data being analyzed for students to be transitioned out into mainstream monolingual classrooms refers to ACCESS testing, monitoring the reading improvement and checking on the reading level students are at according to the graded books they are challenged with, provides teachers with definite information on the progress of students on a daily basis and without the pressure of a one-time only standardized test, which could not reflect real performance of the students because of the pressure of the test itself.

Often, students who feel they cannot read just give up. When provided with texts at their own guided reading level, students begin to realize exactly what they are capable of and eventually develop an excitement for reading. Making reading fun and enjoyable encourages students to take part in reading activities more often, being motivation such a key factor that, quoting Lyons (2003: 84), could be thought of as "arguably the most critical ingredient for long-term success in learning to read and write".

Utilizing guided reading within the classroom provides educators with an effective way to differentiate reading instruction, allowing them to meet the needs of their students, taking the stress off the students who do not feel successful. Thus, accuracy is an indicator of whether or not students are reading books at an appropriate level. As pointed out by Fountas & Pinnell (1996: 90), the accuracy rate lets the teacher know whether the right books are being selected, taking into consideration books should be neither too easy nor too hard.

The criteria followed for leveling A-Z graded guided reading books includes aspects such as word count, the number of different words and the ratio of different words to total words, the number of high-frequency words and the ratio of high-frequency words to total words, the number of low-frequency words and the ratio of low-frequency words to total words, sentence length and sentence complexity, predictability, language pattern and repetition, print size, spacing, number of words per page, illustration support, concept load or even topic familiarity.

Feeling comfortable in their daily routines, facing their teacher and not a mere test administrator without a recognizable face for them, are factors that could diminish performance during ACCESS test and rather give teachers a more real sense of the level of the students through their guided reading performance.

According to Ede (1980: 196), it is the teacher in the classroom who has to assess the widely differing experiences and language which each child brings to school, and then to plan activities which build on those foundations, whatever they may be.

To become an accomplished reader, the child must have mastered the rules governing symbol-sound correspondence in English, be able to use those rules in learning words and progressively refine and automate word-decoding, and acquire and perfect a complex set of processing skills that allows for rapid processing of incoming material and the extraction of meaning. Thus, referring to Hildreth (1958: 2), reading is a mental process involving the interpretation of signs perceived through the sense organs.

9.1 Management

Much research evidence indicates that teachers can create more time on academic tasks by managing students (minimizing disruptions), managing engagement (ensuring high amounts of time on talk) and managing content (monitoring student progress).

Guided reading, because of the sessions being thought for reduced groups of students with the supervision of the teacher, requires the whole group of students in a classroom to be divided into small groups allocated in different working stations around the room, being one of the workstations devoted to guided reading sessions.

Workbooks are to be allocated at every working station other than the guided reading one because, quoting Anderson (1985: 48), "workbooks permit teachers to keep some students occupied so that other students in the class can be taught in small groups".

That way, teachers can monitor students from the guided reading workstation, and supervise the guided reading activity at the same time. Students benefit from group work time and teachers benefit from different contents being autonomously developed in different spaces, and from addressing the reading needs of the students in a more individualized way. On top of

that, referring to Alvermann (1987: 139), group work can increase students' achievement and encourage positive feelings about learning.

Monitoring students is easier in reduced environments represented by small groups of students, and along with that advantage goes the more individualized work attention and correction. Students enjoy with a more intimate situation which presents them with the opportunity of better interacting among themselves and with their teacher being reading the epicenter the activity gravitates around.

> Grouping students provides the pedagogical advantages associated with a workshop environment, and it also makes it easier to monitor students. Checking for understanding is easier and more accurate, and students can participate more than they can when they are in a traditional classroom.
>
> Williams (1990: 134)

In classes shared by both native and immigrant students, these two groups tend to regroup so that immigrant students feel unable to communicate with their native partners. The minority-language students, as explained by Williams (1990: 136), are immediately segregated by language and ethnicity and never have the opportunity to interact with native English speakers.

This damaging pattern can be overridden by teachers mixing these students when assigning reading groups, empowering cultural enrichment and granting language access and practice to those students who need it the most.

Students being divided into reduced groups and working on different activities enable cooperative learning, and second language learners may interact with native partners and develop their language skills by doing so. In fact, according to Richards (1978: 153), pupil-pupil interactions in small groups or in a one-to-one situation offer a number of advantages to second language learners, particularly from a sociolinguistic point of view. For many children such "participant-structures" provide a more culturally congenial means of interacting, permitting cooperative learning as opposed to the competitiveness which often characterizes full class interactions.

> Group work can be considered an area of L2 research of important pedagogic interest. It is often considered an essential feature of communicative language teaching.
>
> Clavel-Arroaitia (2012: 35)

Other cross-curricular contents may be reviewed and reinforced preparing appropriate material for it to be implemented in the workstations, while guided reading is taking place.

9.2 Vocabulary

Guided reading considers vocabulary as a set of words to be recognized and expressed by students, who are to be able to visually identify words and pronounce them correctly.

English language contains a number of words which is unattainable for novice language learners, so the guided reading vocabulary learning process begins aiming at high frequency words, so that the input is comprehensible. In this sense, Alvermann (1987: 66) stated that the number of words in printed school English is estimated to be about 88,500.

The chosen words are grouped in wordlists that are taught and tested through different stages of learning. Once certain words from the list are correctly recognized and pronounced by the student, they are voided from future testing.

Celce-Murcia (1979: 127) explains how the Kučera-Francis list (1967), Dolch (1941), and the Thorndike-Lorge list (1944) are examples of high frequency word lists. These lists can be valuable when teaching important "sight words", especially words which are commonly used in our language.

When a student is capable of rapidly identifying and pronouncing all the words in the list, that student is thought to have enough mastery of them as to start working upon other skills involved in the reading and writing process.

In order for a student to memorize the words contained in the list, teachers work on consisting repetition drills so that language learners improve their reading abilities by imitating the skills modeled by educators. Sounding is an aid in learning words permanently, because sounding out a word strengthens retention of the visual form. Ostension is the process of pointing to things and saying their names, and encouraging children to repeat the name words, as explained by Ede (1980: 64).

Youngest language learners are given images associated with the targeted words for them to not only recognize a word and pronounce it, but also to understand the meaning each word implies, since visualizing the concepts represented by words has been demonstrated to be a useful device for understanding and remembering word meanings, as stated by Alvermann (1987: 73).

To work on the memorization and understanding of words, flashcards and pictorial dictionaries are obviously useful tools teachers utilize with young students, but also graded guided reading books start at the lowest levels containing only some of the targeted words from the sight words list, and also big pictures accompanying short sentences which function as referent for those words to be learnt, the same way children learn words as wholes through the use of picture dictionaries in which, according to Hildreth (1958: 136), meanings are established between the words and the pictures that illustrate them.

After the targeted sight words are learnt as single units used in sentences, students begin developing understanding of not just words but sentences first, and paragraphs later, improving their cognitive reading in a natural way by growing from managing units to managing wholes. In the same sense, and quoting Alverman (1987: 64), "comprehension of individual words is strongly related to comprehension of passages".

English language is taught attending to words as units because it is not a phonetic language, so learning how to read based on the association of a single phoneme to a single letter, making them sound together to pronounce words, is not a valid methodology to learn English.

Students who are learning English as a second language have to acquire new reading habits if their mother tongue is a phonetic one. English words are taught as units, pronouncing them after the model represented by the teacher, and understanding their meaning by using pictorial references.

9.3 Reading

Given that guided reading is oriented towards children who are learning to read, books have to be interesting to them so that they feel appealed, engaged, and reading is presented as an enjoyable activity.

> The language children read on their own, or that in reading books, should be interesting to them, using words that they understand, most of which will be from the spoken language.
>
> Wilkinson (1971: 201)

Success must be attainable when first reading a book, so it is vital that the vocabulary included in the book is already known by the reader. Sight words learning precedes reading books, so the words in the book are to be recognizable by students, who are also capable of pronouncing them. Frustration would be an important negative element otherwise, which could instantly diminish the desirability of reading books.

> As the student acquires more words to the personal vocabulary, reading stages are accomplished and graded books go along the individual vocabulary depending on the stage of the student, so appropriateness of the vocabulary of the books with regards to the vocabulary of the student can be constant. Thus, for activities to be motivating, teachers must select activities at a moderate level of difficulty so that students perceive that success is possible.
>
> Hoffman (1986: 235).

The selection of books is vital when implementing guided reading, since they are what channels students through progress, determining the outcome of the reading activity based on their engaging power, appropriateness of vocabulary, and correct density of texts and illustrations, providing students with the highest possibility of succeeding and the lowest possibility of failure imaginable. In fact, quoting Anderson (1985: 147), "the materials that are currently being read determine, in large part, current reading abilities and readability findings".

If the students feel appealed to the books they are presented with, progression is more likely than it would otherwise, since students are to read every specific book several times, both at school and at home, before taking on a new one.

For those children studying English as a second language, whose mother tongue is other than English, their background knowledge is probably different than that of natives. In these cases, books based on different cultural background knowledge, with different itinerary references for foreign students to recognize and feel appealed to, are both necessary and difficult to find. According to Anderson (1985: 170), improving the match of texts to readers with nonmainstream cultural backgrounds is an issue.

Before actually reading the first book, students need previous steps for guided reading to be effective. Children need to familiarize with books, and certain sight words are to be obviously mastered so that they can be recognized in the book.

At the very first stages of reading even pointers are commonly used, so that students get used to point each word prior to any pronunciation, so that recognition starts the process. By doing this two goals are accomplished, the engaging effect increases because of the gamy factor brought along by pointers resembling monster fingers, or any other funny shapes, and the acquisition of reading habits by eliciting students to point at a word before reading it.

Before long, students improve their reading skills, and they no longer need to point at words before reading them, so that fluency can be worked upon.

> To help students develop progressively their ability to read more and more fluently and independently materials of increasing difficulty and complexity, six stages of reading development are recommended: introduction to reading, familiarization, acquiring reading techniques, practice, expansion and autonomy.
>
> Rivers (1978: 212)

Guided reading session are not limited to the reading itself since both pre-reading and post-reading activities are developed. Before reading a book, pre-reading activities prepare students to later interact with the book on their own.

Thus, introductory open questions are useful for students to take about the topic the book deals with, and acquire certain understanding on it orally. Post-reading activities are created to consolidate the understanding of what has been read, and also to work on different aspect such as writing using whiteboards, asking students to correctly spell words they have just dealt with while reading the book.

Preparation exercises prepare the way for the reading passage being therefore part of the presentation, whereas exploitation exercises draw their substance from the reading passage after it had been read, being part of exploitation.

As the students progress through different stages of reading and graded books, better reading comprehension is demanded to understand the contents of the books, which use extensive vocabulary, longer sentences and less pictorial aids than initiative books.

This is a process feeding off itself, since higher level books demand an ability that has been worked upon through the reading of previous books, which have constantly and progressively challenged the reading comprehension of the students. Therefore, referring to Anderson (1985: 4), it could be said that reading comprehension is not a unitary process but a complex process comprised of a number of interacting subprocesses instead.

Post-reading activities also provide students with deeper processing regarding reading. An example of it would be the development of summarizing activities right after the book has been read, trying to utilize abstract words that contain relevant meaning aiming at holophrasing, what has been defined by Ede (1980: 69) as finding single words which express on their own the meaning of an entire sentence.

9.4 Writing

Students who are first learning a language need to work on writing as much as they do on reading. Even though guided reading is not focused on writing, post-reading activities are capable of developing not only but also writing skills, testing the capabilities of the students to recreate words from the book they read through writing them on whiteboards to check the spelling.

The reason for it is that, as pointed out by Celce-Murcia (1979: 125), preliterate ESL students need a great deal of practice in handwriting.

Working on spelling is also beneficial for students to better memorize the words, which belong to the list of sight words targeted by them, included in leveled guided reading books. Just as the visual and oral aspects of the vocabulary being taught through repetition drills, pictorial aids, pronunciation and testing, the graphic aspect represented by writing and spelling sight words contained in the selected books in post-reading activities help educators teaching vocabulary.

Learning to spell words commonly met in reading and using these words in written expression provide another form of reinforcement for permanent retention of printed words, as noticed by Hildreth (1958: 133).

10. BILINGUALISM

It is hard to define bilingualism because of the ambiguity of the term itself. Theoretically, a bilingual speaker is someone who masters more than one language including the four basic communicative skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. These four skills represent both verbal and written expression and comprehension, and are considered the frame most languages are built upon.

The first issue to be faced is how to qualify the mastery degree a speaker possesses on specific languages. There is no clear way to judge on that matter and, throughout time, it has been inferred from the behavior of the speaker in given situations, the level of cognition or even using IQ tests.

The degree of bilingualism also depends on the exposure the speaker has to the targeted languages. Thus, first-generation immigrants in the USA are relatively exposed to English since most of them did not know English before they arrived and they live in Hispanic sub-divisions, they get TV channels which broadcast in Spanish through satellite dishes or cable, they socialize with other Hispanics and they enroll their children in bilingual schools so they can communicate with the staff in Spanish through the bilingual teachers or the liaisons.

We cannot underrate how important siblings are in language socialization and literacy development for their relations in immigrants.

This all makes them feel comfortable and it helps them out accomplishing a better adaptation to a new life.

Extra (1999: 46) alleges that if a kid is raised bilingual but he does not produce on both languages, he will choose one language to speak to his children, being this a language shift if many people do it.

Second-generation Hispanics living in the USA go through bilingual education so they obviously have better communicative skills in English than their parents did. They are exposed to English at school, they have friends who do not know Spanish, they have to use English from the very beginning in restaurants, stores, gas stations and they may even get married with a Caucasian person. In this sense, Brisk (2006: 96) claims that family is a motivational powerhouse when learning languages.

Second-generation Hispanics do not usually master neither Spanish nor English, since the Spanish surrounding them is improvable and the lack of total immersion in English at home makes it impossible for them to perfectly master English as well. They have communicative skills in both languages but this is the generation that would use Spanglish the most since both Spanish and English are around them but they do so in an inconsistent way. These kids, who were from five to thirteen by the time they emigrated along with their parents are, according to Extra (1999: 261), called intermediate generation.

Thrid-generation speakers grow up in way different conditions. Their parents have far better communication skills than their grandparents did so English is around from day one. They are sometimes called semi-speakers since they only use Spanish to communicate with their grandparents, other than that they only use English so they end up having a broken Spanish and second to none English. These kids do not need to enroll in bilingual education and they only hold some knowledge of Spanish because of their heritage but only in a vestigial way. There are

some places such as San Bernardo or Sabine River in Louisiana where vestigial Spanish is common to every speaker.

Perfect bilingualism is thought to be inexistent since every speaker mastering more than one language, has use preferences on one language over the other or has a slight better knowledge of one specific language among the many languages that speaker could get to master. Recent works by Rosen and Burgess in 1980, and by Paulston in 1978 show that bilingualism is not an all-or-none property but an individual characteristic that may exist to degrees varying from minimal competence to complete mastery of more than one language.

Difference must be made clear between elitist and folk bilingualism, since elitist bilingualism is voluntary and folk bilingualism is not voluntary but necessary because of the specifics of certain language situations.

We can speak of balanced bilingual speakers, referring to those speakers who possess a nearly equal mastery level over more than one language. Balanced bilinguals are usually bicultural too, mastering not only different languages but also different background knowledge inherent to the community of speakers those languages are associated with. Bicultural status is usually gained being a resident in the country of culture and, being different from bilingualism, it is possible to be bilingual without being bicultural but not the other way round.

On the other hand we also have to take into account semilinguals, who are those speakers immersed in a language conflict situation that end up not mastering any languages they might use. This happens when a speaker gives up a language before learning the second and it usually comes along with early schooling. An example of semilinguals could be found when looking at immigrants who moved to a country with an official language they did not master and, their second generation immigrant children might end up lacking mastery in both the languages they

are exposed to in and out of their houses because of the inconsistency of the situation, since they are never exposed to a fully developed language.

Semilingualism is also called distractive bilingualism, being it different from receptive bilingualism which occurs when a speaker is capable of understanding another language but not producing in it. Also different is the mutual intelligibility, which happens when a speaker of one language understands another language not because he possesses knowledge on it but because both languages share many lexical and grammatical features. Mutual intelligibility occurs, for example, between Spanish and Portuguese speakers.

10.1 Spanglish

Speakers who have been exposed to more than one language are capable of code-switching. It is not only that they are capable of doing it but also that they may need to go through code-switching because one language, or even both languages they possess, are broken. Therefore their competence is limited and they use both of them to accomplish communication by complementing the use of both languages in the very same message.

By continuously code-switching, the mixture of English and Spanish gave birth to a new pseudo-language called Spanglish, being it the product of that melting pot. The term was invented by the Puerto Rican journalist Salvador Tio and it refers mainly to the language used by Hispanics living in the USA, since many illiterate Hispanics make constant use of this mixture of English and Spanish. This is why it is thought that Spanglish does not represent freedom, it usually tells you that the speaker is not well-educated. It also shows how the speaker did surrender to English language but because of the lack of knowledge in both Spanglish and English, Spanglish is used as a complete language made up with two broken languages in the

mind of the illiterate speaker. Other times speakers are well-educated but they deliberately use Spanglish even though they master both Spanish and English. Spanglish is spoken by over twenty-five million people and it discriminates Hispanic people who do not know English and also English speakers who do not know any Spanish.

Technically speaking, the term Spanglish is nothing other than a popular name used to label the mixture we are talking about but it has not linguistic back-up. Linguists refer to Spanglish as the continuous and spontaneous code-switching from Spanish to English and the other way round, being code-switching the mixing of two or more languages in discourse with no change of interlocutor or topic made by bilinguals and, if intra-sentential, it may change word order.

On top of that we have to take into account that it is not the same to be bilingual and choose to code-switch than to be monolingual and have a mixture of Spanish and English as your only communicative option. The latter is the case of many Puerto Ricans who grow up learning only one language which is neither English nor Spanish but Spanglish instead.

Spanglish was a predictable creation since there is a solid contact between English and Spanish in the USA, mainly in the border line. In American southern states close to the border line, it is easy to find Spanish speakers, and so it is in Mexican northern states by the very same reason. This is where the term Tex-Mex comes from, since Texas and Mexico are closely related. Also English has never been the only language spoken in the USA, since it has been a land of settlers, slaves and immigrants, a melting pot made up of many different pieces, so Spanglish should surprise nobody.

Fortunately enough, neither English nor Spanish are killer languages in this mixture, unlike English in Louisiana which is killing French and it is now only used ethnically. In Quebec

there was risk of having French being killed by English but they gave French the economics so that its survival would be ensured. These situations happen at areas with languages in contact, when a lot of languages are in contact in the same region we call it Sprachbund and we may find examples of it in Washington and Oregon where three language families can be found, Salishan includes twenty one languages, Wakashan embraces six languages and finally Chimakuan has two languages. These are linguistic communities with multidirectional influences.

Some English speakers have adapted to the present situation by learning some Spanish but there are many who seem reluctant to learn Spanish because they consider that mastering the dominant language should be enough. Even though both options are equally acceptable, Spanish is an unofficial language used as much as if it was official and, depending on the area, you might find it difficult to communicate unless you know some Spanish within US soil, as it proofs the mind blowing signs you could easily find in many stores around Miami announcing you they do speak English, considering it something not given for granted but a plus.

Arnau (1992: 62) highlights the fact of Spanish language not being granted official status in the United States but being considered official, along with English language, in Puerto Rico, a self-governing unincorporated territory of the United States of America.

On the other hand, Spanish speakers who are well-educated use to turn their backs on Spanish and make constant use of English, since they want to feel less Hispanic to abandon the minority they belong to and enter or approximate to the Caucasian ethnic group to benefit from it in their daily lives. Something really curious is that bilingual Hispanics, being well-educated or not, approach each other in Spanish as a brothering language, a shared feature that makes them connect, a linking language bond.

It is not the same to be bilingual and to choose to code-switch consciously than to be monolingual and grow up learning only one language made up of the mixing of two other languages. The existence of people who completely master two languages and do not fail to be proficient in both of them is doubtful, and it is rather easier to find semilingualism situations where two non-mastered languages complement each other in a perfect blend of a hybrid.

Sometimes we can find positive aspects of Spanglish that make it surpass English or Spanish because it has a wider pool of words to better express an idea, enriching our communicative possibilities. Code-switching might be used to emphasize, repeat or substitute, quote or even to express ideas that are not feasibly translatable. Other times we may come across complete abominations.

In that area we could place the humor of Ilan Stavans, a former Columbia University professor currently lecturing Latin American and Latin Culture at Amherst College in Massachusetts, who played with Spanglish creating impossible calques or even translating one complete chapter from “Don Quixote” into Spanglish just for the fun of it.

10.2 Bilingual education

Bilingual education is an umbrella term embracing several bilingual programs with different educational goals. These programs run instruction using two or more languages and they do not include situations where L2 is taught as a specific subject with an assigned time slot but rather integrated teaching time embedded in the general curriculum.

Krashen (1985: 85) claims that bilingual programmes can teach English effectively if two conditions are met: there should be a source of comprehensible input in English as well as solid

first-language subject-matter teaching, the latter providing the extra-linguistic information that will help make English input more comprehensible.

Among the many programs running nowadays, we could highlight segregation programs, submersion programs, immersion programs and finally language and culture maintenance programs. These are the most relevant programs, but it is worth taking into account that, quoting Baker (1995: 132), "there are more than forty different types of bilingual schooling in the USA today".

Segregation programs are aimed at sustaining difference among speakers of different languages. Recent examples of bilingual segregation programs may be found in South Africa, as apartheid wanted to be perpetuated by the white minority, and also in Germany, as students with Turkish descent suffer from a similar segregation. The basics of this program include instruction in L1 with only a few hours of L2 study a week ESL style and both teachers and curriculum from the students´ country of origin, generally until fifth grade. At that point, students are transferred to the monolingual program in that school.

By using this specific bilingual program, the targeted supremacy of L2 over L1 is accomplished but academic results, on the other hand, use to be poor in both languages.

Submersion programs have a different goal, they end up eliminating both culture and original language from a given minority. This situation has occurred in African countries where colonial languages wanted to take over and also in powerful countries receiving immigrants. Instruction is developed using the dominant language so that students assimilate the dominant culture, suffering a riddance of their origins.

Transitional programs are a sub-type of submersion programs and they are especially interesting in this research since they are typically used in the United States. Transitional programs try to transition the bilingual student into monolingual programs. In order to accomplish that goal, instruction goes from an all L1 situation into the only L2 status. Gradually, the percentage of L1 used in instruction gets reduced as the percentage of L2 gets amplified in a grade basis. Arnau (1992: 81) points out how transition can be divided into early or late transition depending on how long a student is enrolled in these programs before transitioning out.

Thus, kindergarten students enrolled in a bilingual school in the United States in a transitional program aimed at flipping from Spanish into English, would get 100 percent of their instruction in Spanish at that grade but, Spanish would go down to 90 percent by first grade building room for that 10 percent in English for their instruction time, as their first exposure should be mild. Second and third grade would follow suit and the student is expected to get transitioned out into monolingual programs by fourth or fifth grade, depending on the use of English of each student and the will of parents.

> Even though enrollment in bilingual programs could last differently, four to six years is considered the minimum exposure period recommended for the program to be successful.
>
> Arnau (1992: 112)

Transitional programs are very interesting since they go from Spanish immersion into English immersion gradually, trying to reduce conflict throughout the process of language substitution. Students benefit from their previous knowledge of L2 but this is a delicate situation, since both the lack of previous knowledge and the excess of defective knowledge could eventually lead students to inadequate transfer from one language into the other language.

Immersion programs are aimed at both bilingualism and biculturalism accomplishing. The native L1 speaker gets into a new situation where instruction is given only using L2 all the way through. Students are supposed not to lose their L1 knowledge, thanks to the exposure to it outside school they experiment. The objectives of immersion programs are really interesting since they do not imply riddance of cultural identity as submersion programs do. Immersion programs are considered additive bilingual programs because they add a new language and its culture to the one the students already possessed instead.

Siguan (2000: 38) explains how research done by the University of Girona in Spain states that the lower the IQ of the student, the better profit that student is going to get from immersion programs.

The immersion programs began in the francophone Canadian area of Quebec since the first time immersion was put down into practice was in the Saint Lambert School in Montreal in 1965. Parents were not satisfied with the thirty minutes daily slots dedicated to teach French to their children so they consulted Dr. Lambert and Dr. Penfield from the McGill University in Montreal in 1963 and they eventually accomplished the organization of the first immersion group being it early total immersion in kindergarten in 1965.

There are two different types of early immersion. Total early immersion offers L2 instruction only for three grades and then it brings L1 into the picture gradually until equity is reached. Partial early immersion offers half of the instruction in L1 and the other half in L2, reading and writing included.

Other than early immersion we also have to consider delayed immersion, late immersion, double immersion and changed immersion. Delayed immersion begins with the use of L2 as mother tongue and, from there, it goes through a period of total immersion and finally a last period of partial immersion. Late immersion makes an initial use of L2 as mother tongue to eventually reach extensive use of it by the late grades. Double immersion is basically used in Quebec to cover the immersion of French and Hebrew at the very same time. Changed immersion is particularly interesting because it flips standard procedures and instruction gets done using the minority L2 at first and then, situation eventually balances gradually making room for L1 in the instruction time as it happens in Culler City, USA, where according to Arnau (1992: 23), both Anglophone and Hispanic students are instructed in Spanish at first and gradually, English gets incorporated.

Immersion programs are also a key point in my research since they are generally used in the United States the same way transitional programs are. In 2009, the Supreme Court stated, regarding Horn v. Flores, that Structured English Immersion is significantly more effective than bilingual education, based on academics

The usage of immersion programs is typically seen addressing English speaking students who want to get a full exposure to Spanish, French, German or Chinese. In these structured immersion programs, teachers must be fluent in the minority language enabling students to learn L2 and content simultaneously, as pointed out by Baker (1988, p.90).

Language and culture maintenance programs share goals with the immersion programs, since they are also made for bilingualism and biculturalism accomplishment. The addressee is not the same, as these programs are designed to help out those students who are at risk of losing L1, L2 or even competence in both of them. This is not unheard of mainly in the Hispanic community in the United States because students may end up using broken English or Spanish, turning both of them into Spanglish due to unsuccessful educational experiences.

Tosi (1984: 163) explains how these programs promote balanced bilingual competence and cultural pluralism, being the counterfeit of compensatory and transitional programs where L1 is used until mastery of L2 is acquired in an assimilation of the minority group.

The main goal of these programs is to maintain the original language and culture of students who swapped L1 into L2 because of a growing competence in the targeted language and a lessening exposure to the original one.

We must also take into account the existence of dual schools whose curriculums are being delivered split in two halves. That way, one half of the day is being instructed in one language and the other half of the day is being instructed in other language.

Ideally, half of the enrolled students at these schools should master one of the two languages and the other half of the enrolled students should master the other language for the program to be really effective.

Some schools, like Alicia R. Chacon Elementary School in El Paso, Texas, go further including a third language for a small portion of the day at all grade levels.

Dual schools are usually private and students are, more often than not, international students whose parents want them to be bilinguals. These schools are not intended to serve language minority students.

An example of a dual school would be the United Nations International School in New York City where the UN delegates enroll their children to be taught both in English and French.

It is necessary to distinguish these bilingual programs from monolingual ESL teaching, which could be considered a sub-type of submersion program with hours of compensatory English instruction by pull-outs, because when dealing with teaching English as a Second Language, we do not use generic curriculum goals but the specifics related to the learning of a new language, leaving its usage as language of instruction limited only to the ESL subject instruction time itself.

The compensatory approach is used to teach English as fast as possible because English is the door that gives access to knowledge. According to Brisk (2006: 138), its outcomes are only judged according to how effective they prove to be when teaching and learning English.

In some occasions, monolingual classes receive assistant teachers who pull specific students out of the room to provide them with ESL training time, helping the mainstream teacher by doing so. Some other times, ESL is not integrated and it is given time slots in the lesson plans as it would happen with any other subject. The latter occurs mainly in High School teaching in the USA.

In monolingual English as a Second Language teaching, students whose mother tongue is also Germanic in its origins, find it much easier to learn English as a Second Language than those whose mother tongues are not Germanic. Students whose mother tongues are German, Dutch, Swedish or Danish would find it easier to perform at ESL than students whose mother tongues are Romance (French, Italian, Spanish, Romanian), Slavic (Russian, Polish, Czech, Bulgarian) or Finno-Ugric (Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian) who face, among many other added difficulties, addressing different word-order.

As a hybrid we find the so-called two way bilingual education, being it the marriage of bilingual education for language minority children and immersion education for language majority children. It is equally concerned with language and academic development of both language minority and language majority children, being the language of instruction the one used by the minority at the very beginning and, as grades go up, it gradually balances in the time slots assigned to the different languages but they are never mixed, they are scheduled in different periods.

> By kindergarten and first grade, the language of the minority would take around ninety per cent of the time. This percentage would go down to eighty by second and third grade and it would finally turn into fifty by fourth, fifth and sixth grade.
>
> (Brisk, 2006: 119)

Students´ performance in bilingual schools is sensitive to cultural incongruence. American culture has reflected on schools in USA, stating what to study, how to study it and why doing it that way. Schools assume students who came from a different country and who possess different background knowledge, to know all about the American culture and that is a mistake. Newcomers are often used to see how their local history, their background knowledge, is not treated as existent when dealing with bilingual schooling in USA.

On top of that, there are many situations where different background knowledge means cultural and pedagogical clashes between teachers and students. Bilingual situations cannot be imported from one country to another because of the differences of the situation. Thus, some foreign students who come from non-individualist cultures feel embarrassed when asked questions in class but, on the other hand, American teachers use to ask students a lot of questions

they already know the answers of, to test retention on the go and consequently, they evaluate as ignorance when a student does not reply without ignorance being the reason of the silence, but cultural clash.

There are many other reasons for bilingual education to fail. Among them we could highlight lack of exposure, mismatch between home and school, socio-economic factors, type of school, quality of the education, degree of bilingualism and real learning difficulties.

The degree of implicature of the parents has an effect on the failure and success rates. Arnau (1992: 70) claims that parents should agree with the fact of their children being enrolled in the bilingual program and rely on that program to become effective and beneficial for the students. Incongruent situations where the student is exposed to a language at school and, at the same time, the student is exposed to a different language at home, may be softened by bilingual and bicultural teaching staff at school.

Some bilingual students are only exposed to their L2 at school since they may live in areas where that language is hardly ever used. Segregation, especially in the United States, makes people divide according to their ethnicity and live in different areas because of it. Thus, people sharing the same ethnicity usually share the same language situations. Most L2 learners are so because their parents and, consequently, themselves, do not know that language so it is fairly common to find scenarios where whole families are L2 learners and L1 is the only language used at home.

Success in bilingual education is directly related to the right choice of school and program when enrolling. An inadequate bilingual program would make it easier for the student to fail at accomplishing objectives so good counseling prior to enrolment is definitely vital for the sake of the process.

Socioeconomics have an impact on the learning process because they mean difficulties when dealing with school related expenditures and complications when creating a proper learning atmosphere outside the school. Real learning difficulties are hard to solve but schools approach them implementing special education teams of certified teachers whose mission is to bridge upon those gaps. Regarding bilingualism, and referring to Lopez (1991: 100), it only seems convenient to embark in bilingual education under the proper social and cultural conditions, and not otherwise.

The many bilingual programs described here need, along with ESL and FL teaching, certified teachers capable enough to make the system accomplish success. The shortage in certified teachers and the growth in LEP speakers in the USA make the teacher demand real high. That is why it is attempted to accomplish teachers being capable of working for different programs at different grade levels throughout development and certification. Among the whole components in the corpus of teachers, we find those certified both in Elementary and in Spanish as the most demanded ones.

> The teacher role becomes as vital for the success of the bilingual program as it is the will based condition for the students to attend. Teachers aim at production through understanding by applying communicative methodologies.
>
> Arnau (1992: 12)

Since the Spanish Constitution was written back in 1978, different languages have been considered official in Spain, breaking with the previous officially monolingual situation imposed by the, at that time, centralist government of Spain. Nowadays, Bilingual education in Spain is a delicate matter since there is more than one official language in the country. We have already

seen this situation happening in the USA when we dealt with Hawaii and the coexistence of both English and Hawaiian languages, and also in Louisiana with the official recognition of both English and the nearly official status granted to French. We also took into account Puerto Rico and its duality based on the official status both English and Spanish are granted there, so we can look for similarities and differences when dealing with bilingual education between USA and Spain.

Language sensitive regions in Spain are located in both the Mediterranean coast and the very North of the nation. In the Mediterranean coast we find Catalonia, Balearic Islands and Valencian Community sharing hands since they all base their coexistence on both Spanish and Catalan as official languages. The North of Spain is more diverse language-wise as Galicia recognizes both Spanish and Galician as official languages of the region, the Basque Country recognizes both Spanish and Basque as official languages and finally, Asturias only recognizes Spanish as their official language but they grant Asturian some status with effect on their education system.

Out of all the official languages recognized in Spain other than Spanish itself, Catalan is, without a doubt, the one that spread the most since it is used not only in Spain but also in some other European locations such as Alghero, which is located on the Italian island of Sardinia and also in the Roussillon region of southern France. Catalan is not hard to understand for Spanish speakers or even French speakers since they three are similar because they are all Romanic languages.

Catalan was normalized in 1983 after the Linguistic Normalization Act, giving rights to the Catalan language so it could be used in class. Even before the Linguistic Normalization Act was passed, Catalan was used in some Private Elementary Schools under the “Escola Catalana”. According to the Linguistic Normalization Act, every student within Catalonian territories is to be proficient in the use of Catalan by the end of compulsory secondary education and it states

that it is in the hands of their families to choose how to accomplish it. It also states that every teacher is required to be proficient in both Spanish and Catalan languages.

Nowadays, Catalonia is running a totally bilingual education system, similar to Luxemburg or the francophone Canadian regions. On 30th August 1983, a Decree was released by the Catalonian government via DOG (Official Diary of the Generalitat) regulating presence of Catalan language in pre-University education. It states that the vehicular language used in Elementary school and earlier stages like Kindergarten or even pre-K can be chosen, but Catalan is to be studied as a separate subject no matter what vehicular language had been chosen at that point.

Middle school includes Science or Social Studies to be chosen as mandatory Catalan language instructed subject by the beginning of Sixth Grade and, not only one but both of them become compulsory, Catalan instructed, before exiting Middle School. By High School and Prep School, the student is to choose two Catalan instructed mandatory subjects out of Science, Arts, History and Mathematics.

Regarding teaching staff, on 9th July 1985, it was officially established that either "Mestre de Català" or "Capacitació Lingüística" is to be accomplished as mandatory certification for every teacher within Catalonian territories willing to work for public schools. This way, the right of every student to be taught in their habitual language being that Spanish or Catalan, would get granted or ensured by the existence of qualified enough teachers.

On top of the proven inherent bilingualism of the education in Catalonia, we must also take into account the implementation of immersion programs called PIL (Linguistic Immersion Program), applied at schools where over 80 percent of the enrolled students have as native

tongue other language than Catalan. Thus, students who meet these characteristics and are embedded in between the ages of three up until eight, qualify for this period of five years of immersion into Catalan which is proven to be beneficial due to the plasticity of the brain at that age, exposed to experiencing daily life through Catalan.

According to Siguan (2000: 91), linguistic immersion is a reality in Catalonia and its success is related to motivation, attitude and the concepts of Catalan identity and integration although new trends do not relate Catalonian to Catalan identity any more. Catalan education system does not intend to turn monolinguals into other language monolinguals but into bilinguals and, at the same time, it tries to prevent multilingual societies from discriminating people whose mother tongue is Catalan.

Each school running PIL has to develop a linguistic project, including work done by the administrators of the school, the board, the teaching staff and the department of orientation. These schools are also eligible to receive assisting teachers who are sent by SEDEC (Service of Catalan Teaching) to help teachers out in class with the teaching of the Catalan Language.

The situation in the Balearic Islands is slightly different from the Catalonian one. The education system is here aimed at accomplishing that every student, no matter what their native language was when they first enrolled, would be able to use correct Spanish and Catalan by the end of their mandatory schooling.

On 12th August 1994, through BOCAIB, the government in the Balearic Islands regulated the use of Catalan in pre-University education, as an alternative to Spanish as the instruction language of choice, turning both of them into equally acceptable choices. This ended up being controversial as numerous demonstrations were held after this modification but, much earlier and due to the fact of the Balearic Islands having Catalan as their official language along with

Spanish, teachers were implementing their knowledge of Catalan since 1979 when the city of Palma began offering this option to teacher staff under supervision of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Other option to implement knowledge of Catalan within the Balearic Islands was offered through specific subjects at University for those yet to become teachers working on their degrees. Finally, teaching positions in Elementary schools within Balearic territories got catalogued, meaning that teachers who did not implement their knowledge of Catalan were no longer certified to work until they solved that situation.

Valencian Community is a very language sensitive region since bilingualism has been part of its history all along. After being conquered by Jaime I, its population got replaced by immigrants from the Spanish speaking region of Aragon and the Catalan speaking region of Catalonia. Thus, from the very beginning of its formation, bilingualism has been a fundamental situation.

Seashore was made up of small individual lots of land, giving birth to urban cities where nobles from Catalonia had Catalan as their native language whereas the area far away from the coast was made up of humongous lots of land being worked by people coming from Aragon and, consequently, having Spanish as their native language. This dichotomy reversed past 1500s, when nobles experienced a process of change turning their language of preference into Spanish because of their linkage with the King, leaving Catalan to be used by workmen.

The depreciation of Catalan was undoubted, to the point of being used mainly by those people who did not know Spanish, since Catalan speakers wanted to turn into Spanish speakers

in order to improve socially. The language you spoke identified you, so the shortage of Catalan speakers rose because people wanted to avoid being identified as part of low class society.

After 1960s, situation reversed again when, along with nationalist movements, great recovery of the Catalan language was experienced. This self-hate produced after the bilingual conflict is the base of the current linguistic intolerance in this region. The fact of Catalan being geographically segregated as there are regions with high use of Catalan language and regions contrasting because of their low use of this language, makes of Valencian Community a melting pot which is hard to regulate in terms of language and education.

On 24th June 1992, LUEV (Llei d´us i ensenyament del Valencià) was passed, regulating the use of Catalan in the education system of the Valencian Community. The main bilingual programs being used are labelled PEV, PIP and PIL. PEV (Programa d´Ensenyament en Valencià) is based on the teaching using Catalan as the language of instruction. PIP (Programa d´incorporació progressiva) is applied to those students who are not fluent in Catalan language, being Spanish their instruction language of choice then. Finally, PIL (Programa de Inmersió Lingüística) is an immersion bilingual program where Catalan language is the only language allowed both for and to teachers and students. PIL is the bilingual program that could interest us the most since it is very similar to the immersion programs we explained when dealing with bilingual programs in the United States of America. Unfortunately, PIL programs are mainly run by private schools in the Valencian Community.

LUEV states that there are three scenarios for linguistic normalization, being them public administration, teaching and the media, as noted by Tosi (1984: 69).

LUEV also established the need for teachers to know both official languages. Knowledge of Catalan language is certified under “Capacitació Lingüística” courses that are required as the

minimal certification, language-wise, needed to work for a public school within the Valencian Community. From June 1990 on, teaching positions in Elementary and Middle Schools are being linguistically catalogued the same way that happened in the Balearic Islands.

It is worth mentioning a dual educational approach ran in Valencia, among few other international spots, labelled CLIL. Content Language Integrated Learning is used both in bilingual and multicultural education and it is based on introducing an additional language, which is to be used for the learning and teaching of both content and language at the very same time. In Valencia, CLIL has been implemented in "Centro Educativo de Cheste", mainly developed by Maria Jesus Frigols, attempting to make possible to study certain subjects while switching the language of instruction, integrating language, learning and content in a well rounded approach.

In order for CLIL to accomplish the goals we might establish, repackaging information in a manner that facilitates understanding through charts, diagrams, drawings or hands-on experiments, is strongly advised. CLIL is still taking its first steps though, since there is a shortage in well prepared teachers capable of putting it down to practice, as well as a lack of appropriate materials and the absence of team teaching traditions in Spain other than in Elementary Education. CLIL is a very interesting approach and it is to be taken into account in the near future as it has a great potential, especially when dealing with cross-curricular references.

Other language which is official in Spain and, other than Spanish itself, is being used internationally is Basque. Euskal Herria is the ideal nation Basque people claim for and it embraces Euskadi and Navarra in Spain plus three French provinces called Iparralde, so Euskal Herria and Basque language along with it, are based both in France and in Spain. Euskal Herria would host over three million people alone.

Euskera, as the Basque people call the Basque language they use, is not a Romanic language. It is not even Indo-European, being its origins some sort of riddle still to be clarified. It spread out thanks to Luis Luciano Bonaparte, who was Napoleon´s niece, since he was greatly interested in this language. Its written form is pretty recent compared to its oral version and this feature makes dialect formation easier.

Thus, Bonaparte distinguishes Vizcaíno, Guipuzcoano, Alto-Navarro, Bajo-Navarro, Labortano, Suletino, Aezloano, Saracenco and Roncalés as recognizable Basque language dialects. Nowadays, "Euskera Batua" has consolidated itself as the current standard version of the Basque language but, in the past, "Gipuzkera Osotua" was a failed trial to standardize Euskera made by Azkue, who at the time was the president of the "Euskaltza Indea" (Academia de la lengua Vasca). Even though "Gipuzkera Osotua" did not succeed, it is widely considered as the base "Euskera Batua" was built upon years later. The reason why "Euskera Batua" succeeded and "Gipuzkera Osotua" did not is credited by the emerging communicating needs due to the process of modernization throughout time.

On 18th December 1979, Basque country was officially granted autonomy by the Spanish government and, as a result, both Euskera and Euskaltza Indea got official status, turning through time into Basque identifiers. Every student had the right to be instructed in Euskera and also to be informed in Euskera. Local government would assist citizens in whatever language they chose, Spanish or Euskera, since both of them were considered official languages from that point on. Government official bulletins and information releases were to be made public in the two official languages of the region.

Media has also evolved and nowadays, ETB offers two different channels using different languages. ETB-1 broadcasts using Euskera and ETB-2 broadcasts using Spanish. Euskera could

also be found in official radio broadcasts in the region, since Irratia does not use Spanish at all through its grid.

Both Euskera and Spanish were established as compulsory subjects through school and, after the Bilingual Decree, different bilingual programs were set up. Teaching model A uses Spanish as the only instruction language whereas teaching model B uses both Spanish and Euskera equally and teaching model C uses Euskera as the only instruction language.

The “Euskal Herriko Unibersitatea” or Basque University has both Spanish and Euskera as its official languages, and it is implementing a potential all Basque itinerary to be added to the regular curricular itineraries. It offers certain subjects to be instructed in Euskera as an alternative to their Spanish instructed counterparts.

Despite being considered a tradition and a symbol of Basque culture, it is surprising to look at the numbers when dealing with local people with limited proficiency regarding knowledge of Euskera. Depending on the level of Euskera proficiency we find three categories: Euskaldunes (capable of comprehending and expressing through reading, writing, speaking and listening), Cuasi-Euskaldunes (capable of comprehending and/or expressing through reading, writing, speaking and/or listening) and Erdaldunes (limited proficiency), being the last group nearly half of the local population.

In Galicia, the proximity to Portugal makes it hard not to compare Galician language with Portuguese language. In order to normalize a language, it is necessary to standardize it but Galician language has always been historically compared to Portuguese language in terms of orthography and phonetics. Decrees have been made to regulate the use of Galician language

both through education and information all across the region, but they have only poured a spoonful of sweetener on a really bitter bilingual reality in need of supervision.

CRTVG was created in Galicia in 1984 to run and administer media in Galicia, embracing both TV and radio services, which are to make use of Galician language in order to promote language and culture of Galicia spreading. TVG, being the TV branch of CRTVG, broadcasts only in Galician through its two eligible channels, TVG and TVG2, although TVG broadcasts some advertisements in Spanish and also the news are broadcasted in Spanish through its international satellite channel Galicia TV America. Radio Galega broadcasts its entirely radio grid in Galician language.

The use of Galician language in education is been regulated in the present time. Galician, being set as a subject itself through school, needs clarification on its capabilities as instruction language.

Asturias is an example of diglossic bilingualism, experiencing a linguistic conflict because the local language is the language used by the minority, as Asturian usage is geographically located mainly in rural areas and socially used by either illiterate or highly literate speakers. Asturian language speakers use to be so because they inherit knowledge of Asturian from their relatives.

Asturian is not an official language in Spain but it is lately being progressively recovered. Even though it has not been granted official status, it is a language with legal value since it was given protection by the “Estatuto de Autonomía de Asturias”. Article 4 states that Asturian language would be granted protection, and that it would be promoted through its use in the media and also in education, respecting its dialects and never making Asturian learning compulsory.

Thus, the Asturian language usage in education, even not being an official language, would not be impossible.

Asturian language and culture can be instructed in Elementary Schools from First Grade all the way up until Sixth Grade but, in order to do so, both school administrators and the school board have to agree on that. Over 70 percent of the Elementary Schools in Asturias instruct Asturian language and culture now. It would turn into an elective subject by High School, but its enrollment rate is being extremely low.

In 1994, the University of Oviedo created a new degree labeled “Título de experto universitario en Filología Asturiana”. It is aimed at Elementary School teachers to be qualified for teaching Asturian language and culture back at school. The University of Oviedo also offers a similar degree, labeled “Título de especialista universitario en Filología Asturiana”, aimed at High School teachers willing to instruct the elective subject in High School.

There is also a “Capability Certificate” for teachers willing to teach Asturian language both in Elementary and Middle School, as explained by Siguan (2000: 15).

USA does not have a federal education system. Every state decides the specifics of the education system running in that state independently. Inside every state, schools are divided into school districts, which not always coincide with the county borders they are located into. School districts may vary in size, since the amount of public schools included in them vary according to the area included or the number of schools in that area. Schools districts are ultimately in charge of taking daily decisions in the local level of the education system in the USA.

The liability school districts have and the rights every state has to decide on the education system running in that state, makes education in USA, from a federal point of view, really diverse. This diversity has an impact on the kind of students enrolled, the curriculum, evaluation, complementary programs ran, salary schedules or even the composition of the administration. Even though state independence is complete, most states share education features such as grade levels or special programs and most of the daily routines inside schools are very much the same.

The Federal Department of Education does exist but it mainly deals with information, orientation and funding of special programs, including the bilingual programs. The head of the Federal Department of Education is the Secretary of Education, member of the cabinet and pointed by the president. The Federal Department of Education is trying to unify the academic standards and benchmarks used in every state and, nowadays, many states have adapted those being successfully used in other states.

From the approval of the No Child Left Behind law in 2001, the Federal Department of Education also measures the productivity of each school, suppressing funds from states and school districts not meeting the required levels. Every student, bilingual or not, has to take a nation-wide test which is an all in English test which is standardized and administered in fifth grade, on top of that they have to take state-wide tests which are all in English too and are administered from third grade upwards.

Depending on the scores of each school, the Adequate Yearly Progress is met or not, according to given benchmarks of accomplishment. Meeting or failing to meet AYP has terrible consequences for schools because if they fail to meet AYP they are put in the red zone list, and if they continuously fail to meet AYP they have to dedicate funds to solve it, otherwise they would eventually lose federal funds and maybe be forced to close down.

Schools with a high percentage of enrolled students belonging to low income families are labeled Title I schools. These schools benefit from special government funds to help the students out with lunch service fee waivers and other economic and educative benefits. When a Title I school does not meet AYP regularly, it could lose these benefits that sometimes are making education feasible for those students who do not grow up in wealthy families. This all made schools look the other way when referring to curriculum and content areas, and they primarily focus now on score achievements so that they do not face the do or die situation of consistently not meeting AYP.

Education system is managed, both school district and state-wise, by the Board of Education and the Director of Education. The board of education is made of a number of important people for the community who get elected and the director of education is the Superintendent who, in some cases, gets elected by the Board of Education.

Most American students choose public school, other students may attend charter schools or even private schools. If we take the 2007 numbers, out of 100,308 schools for 49,843,083 students in the USA, only 4,132 were charter schools and over 10,000 dollars were destined to the expenditures of each student making a total expenditure of over 500,000,000,000 altogether.

Education in the USA is mandatory and free and it is usually offered to kids from the age of five. It is divided in three stages including Elementary, Middle and High School. Elementary School generally embraces all grades from Kindergarten until fifth or sixth grade whereas Middle School includes grades from sixth up to eighth and High School goes from ninth to twelfth Grade. This distribution of grade levels may vary, especially in those school districts running Junior High Schools.

Every school is headed by a Principal, who is elected by the School District Board of Education. Principals run the management of schools, controlling both students and teaching staff in order to ensure the school runs smoothly towards the accomplishment of its objectives. Teaching staff gets evaluated by the Principals through observations that lead to the proposals principals hand to the Board of Education, going from continuation to termination. Teachers who are in their first four years of service, are observed regularly to ensure the quality of their teaching and, those who are over those four years, are tenured and because of it they go through observation only every other year, since they have already proven what they are capable of to the eyes of the principal.

Bilingual programs in the USA, understood as programs where both English and another language are used for instructional purposes, are surrounded by diversity of opinion, since there are groups of people who think they would be neither beneficial for the social integration of the immigrant students enrolled in them nor beneficial for academic success or to keep bilingual status in the students. As a result of the pressure established by these groups of people against bilingual programs, some states are not funding bilingual programs any longer. That is the case of California, Arizona or Massachusetts. Even though funds have been revoked, school districts avoid eliminating bilingual programs by finding new ways of funding them as opposed to being withdrawn.

Bilingual education within US territory began in the 1960s as rich and well-educated Cuban people came to the South of Florida fleeing from Fidel Castro´s administration. Thus, Coral Way School began running a bilingual program aimed at Cuban immigrants who spoke Spanish and also at Anglophone children, so that both of them ended up turning bilingual and biliterate. This version spread, by the late 1960s, deviating from its original objectives into English language learning and updating.

Along US soil, the reasons to label a region as language sensitive are different. Some states have, as we have already mentioned, English as their official language, as opposed to other states where English shares official status with another language, states where no language is granted official status and states where, independently of the official language they have, the number of LEP speakers makes English the language of the minority of the population in that state, even being on US soil.

Limited English Proficient speakers are mostly found in Texas, California and Florida. In Laredo, a city located in Webb County, Texas, 94.3 percent of the population was Hispanic by 2001, being 42.3 percent out of this huge Hispanic population under the poverty benchmark, according to the year 2000 US Census. In Los Angeles County, 44.6 percent of the population is Hispanic and, within the Los Angeles United School District, 69.9 percent of the students were Hispanic by 1999. In Miami-Dade County, Florida, 57.3 percent of the population is Hispanic and, in the same County, Palm Springs Elementary School has reached a 95 percent rate of Hispanic students out of their total enrolment, and Eastman Elementary, a school belonging to the Los Angeles United School District, eventually reached a 95% Hispanic students enrolment rate.

Lately, the term Limited English Proficient (LEP) is being taken over by the term English Language Learner (ELL) because it is considered a less pejorative label for them. In the USA we can find many languages other than English being used, mainly Spanish, French, German, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Chinese, Polish, Greek, Japanese, Welsh and Indigenous Indian Languages. This condition places English as the instruction language sooner or later, as a unifying tool for people whose languages are different, to live together and receive instruction without being separated from each other.

In Puerto Rico, being a semi-independent territory under the monitoring and control of the United States of America, Spanish comes up on top when looking at the number of speakers in the population. This is even more important if we take into account that English is being imposed as a compulsory subject at all school levels nowadays, given that Public School instruction in Puerto Rico is conducted entirely in Spanish.

10.3 Cognitive effects

Bilingualism has many more effects other than the obvious improving communicative possibilities given by the mastery of two or even more different languages. It has been debated about the possibility of bilingualism implying suffering or low performance at school or even brain damage, reflecting in the thinking process or placing half-developed languages as the only possible counterfeit of complete monolingualism.

Actually, being bilingual is completely beneficial for every speaker and, in many countries, it is even imposed to be bilingual, being rare the cases where the speaker has the choice to decide on the possibility of becoming bilingual or not.

According to Bialystok (1991: 183), the cognitive effects of bilingualism appear relatively early in the process of becoming bilingual and do not require high levels of bilingual proficiency nor the achievement of balanced bilingualism.

Bilinguals are aware of which language fits with interpersonal communication better and, through their capability of switching languages, develop a greater sensibility towards the language. Future indicates how people would need bilingual or even multilingual education to achieve a proper competence level.

Bialystok (1991: 138) also explains how bilingual children would have an advanced awareness of language processing because of their rich and unique experience of interacting with the world through two linguistic systems, processing language differently from monolingual children.

> Fearing bilingualism being cognitively detrimental is unfounded, and even though bilingualism has not ultimately been proven as cognitively beneficial, the mere fact of mastering more than one language widens the language spectrum and processing capabilities of bilingual students. Ultimately, how intelligent bilingual speakers really become is directly linked to the social and cultural scenarios surrounding them.
>
> Lopez (1991: 91)

10.4 Social effects

Bilingualism is also socially relevant since there are many children from a low socio-economic status background speaking poor or no English who encounter massive school failure with consequent early school drop out and low integration into the economic life of the nation. In multiethnic monolingual schools, equal treatment does not constitute equal opportunity. Better opportunities for those children whose proficiency in the school language is limited can be best achieved through instruction in their mother tongue while proficiency in English is being developed. In society, equilibrium is, more often than not, maintained by the educational institution that socializes youth.

USA needs immigrants to keep running because of many reasons. The amount of immigrants living in the USA is escalating and it has already reached considerable levels for the nation to malfunction without them. Manpower used for certain jobs, which do not appeal to the rest of the population, is basically made up of immigrants and, without that manpower, without those jobs being done and without the taxes those workers contribute with being revenue collected, the nation would suffer from an unbalanced situation.

Glass ceilings are to be found at many levels by immigrant workers who progress at what they are doing. In a nation where up until few years ago women where paid less than men by working in the very same position just because of their gender condition, a nation where college graduates see how their income goes up 10% over colleagues who did not go to college working in the very same position just by their academic condition, immigrants, who are still occasionally getting paid less than Caucasians working in the same position just by their ethnography, see education as a tool to make a difference in their economic conditions and also not to be isolated by society, gaining communication skills that would open many doors for them Americanizing their lives on the way.

Wal-Mart, the biggest employer in USA, is currently facing a gender discrimination lawsuit, Dukes v. Wal-Mart Stores Inc., alleging female employees being discriminated against in matters regarding both salary schedules and promotions.

Thus, it could be said that the government, despite spending funds dedicated to run bilingual programs at school, is also benefitting from the Americanized immigrants since they revert back to the work market paying revenue taxes by doing it, making those expenditures look less complimentary than what it appears to be, since they are market investments that would produce and maintain the immigrant manpower USA needs to sustain itself.

For those who are not to face ethnography related glass ceilings, bilingualism is really beneficial in the business world, since it enables international relations and global vision, making businesses much more profitable. Therefore, bilingual businessmen achieve excellence over their monolingual competence, since they are truly capable of individually working different markets based on different languages, whereas monolingual businessmen are restricted to those markets based on the one language of knowledge, or markets that occasionally utilize the one language of knowledge not as the base language but as the enabler language of marketing mediation, surpassing the language mismatch.

10.5 Academics

Since bilingualism in general, and balanced bilingualism where high proficiency is reached in different languages in particular, stimulate cognitive development and promote academic achievement, bilingualism is claimed to have a positive effect on the academic achievement.

ELLs benefit from the opportunity to develop and learn through their first language as well as the second language. Consequently, additive-bilingual children outperform their monolingual counterparts on tasks requiring high levels of cognitive control.

Light is shed on this matter by both the cognitive and the cultural perspectives. Thus, the cognitive perspective suggests that bilingualism is beneficial to mental development because it allows bilingual children to switch easily between two linguistic mediums, whereas the cultural perspective holds that bilingual children have better access to the ethnic and cultural capital of their parents than do their monolingual counterparts.

It has also been claimed that bilingualism is beneficial for academic achievement only because it prevents a language gap from emerging between parents and children, especially in cases where parents are first generation immigrants with a lower mastery of their foreign language, which is not foreign but second to their children. Here, bilingualism prevents children from subtracting communication possibilities with their families.

Chronologically, bilingualism plays a key factor in children's academic developmental trajectories during their early school years, who generally experience lower results than monolinguals at the very first stages of schooling, but tend to close the gap by fifth grade, although research studying the relationship between early language proficiency and academic achievement is limited.

Exposure is vital when learning languages, as proven by the fact of students attending early-exit bilingual programs, where children received 2-3 years of first language exposure with the second language, not scoring at the same levels in reading and math as those attending late-exit bilingual programs, where children receive 5-7 years of first language exposure with the second language.

According to the second language acquisition theory, students with solid first language skills are thought to be able to transfer them over to their second language. Therefore, second language competence is determined by the level of first language capability the child has achieved prior to second language exposure, thus implying that children who have stronger skills in their home language upon school entrance or before receiving instruction in the second language are more likely to be successful in their second language.

Similar foundations are defended by the developmental-interdependence hypothesis, which predicts that a growth in the skills in one language would be reflected by a corresponding development of the same abilities in a second language. However, for those children whose first language is less well-developed, exposure to the second language may impede the development of the first language.

The level of linguistic competence in the first language, attained by bilingual children, acts as an intervening variable in mediating the effects of bilingualism on children's cognitive and academic development.

Hispanic-American children are the fastest growing ethnic minority group in U.S. schools. In fact, since the 1990-1991 school year, the ELL population has grown approximately 65%, while the general school population has grown only 12%, as explained by the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs (NCLEA) back in 2005.

A number of studies have reported significant correlations between Spanish and English reading skills among Hispanic students in the United States, as appreciated by Bialystok (1991, p.76).

10.6 Language use

Language is constantly changing as the living concept it is, updating and correcting itself based on the way people use it. Therefore, since languages are not static, becoming bilingual is

not a constant status. On top of that, the constant changes in language are not corruptions that can or should be eliminated or prevented.

> The actual changing usage of people constitutes the basis of all the correctness there can be in language, and the facts upon which to state the history of a language.
>
> Fries (1962: 43)

Bilingualism requires permanent attention on the variations experimented by the languages mastered by any individual, who otherwise would eventually face an outdating process, and ultimately the loss of bilingual capabilities.

Linguistic dedication is a must in the field of bilingualism and multilingualism, whereas the lack of commitment is a clear detrimental factor to fight against in order to preserve our communicative skills.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2011 there were more than sixty million people aged over five years old who spoke a language other than English at home, representing five times less than the numbers of speakers using English at home.

Out of the sixty million people speaking a language other than English at home, almost forty million speakers used Spanish, being by far the biggest community of speakers in that group.

As a consequence of the aforementioned numbers, English is clearly expected to be influenced by other languages in general, and by Spanish in particular, being Spanglish an example of it that has been previously studied here.

11. INTEGRATIVE IT ESL METHOD

> Integrating and implementing new technologies when teaching languages means adapting teaching methodologies, because it needs students to interact with new devices and get familiarized with them, it widens the doors of contacting with other language learners worldwide and it resizes the roles of both the teacher and the students (Arconada, M. 2002. p.86).

Reality surrounding teachers and learners is changing at a rapid pace, linguistic needs and believes are not static, and logic leads us to understand how teaching renewals are to be consolidated in order to serve students best.

Chomsky (1968: 92) already explained how changes in linguistic theory are inevitable in coming years due to linguistics being a living subject.

First of all, any proposals regarding new language teaching methodologies based on the incorporation of computing are to highlight the engaging factor computers bring along, because motivation is a key factor in every aspect of education in general, and in language teaching in particular.

In this sense, and according to Roca (1996: 14), one of the most influential factors in second language acquisition is motivation.

Continuity in this field is equally necessary and useful since the recent communicative methodology, which has been lately accepted as the basis of eclectic methodological points of view, makes use of the concept of language being considered a tool to achieve communication. Aiming at communication over any other linguistic aspect strengthens the motivation of learners, who feel appealed when it comes to trying to communicate taking the spotlight away from correctness, and also by mimicking real life communicational situations. As pointed out by Willis (1999: 1), there is general agreement nowadays that people learn a language best by actually using the language to achieve real meanings and achieve real outcomes.

Given that children are expected to learn languages at shorter ages than they were before, and taking into account the existence of numerous studies pointing at young kids enjoying from a natural and uncanny ability to easily understand new languages, early exposure to the targeted languages seems beneficial.

What should be aimed at, is exposure that is organized in three ways. First the language that learners are expected to understand and produce should be graded in some way so that learners do not face such difficulties and complexities at an early stage that they become demotivated.

Secondly the language they are to be exposed to should be carefully selected so that they are given not random exposure, but exposure to the commonest patterns and meanings in the language – the patterns and meanings they are most likely to meet when they begin to use language outside the classroom.

Thirdly there should be some way of itemizing the language syllabus so that it should be possible not simply to expose students to language, but also to highlight important features of their language experience, and to point to what language we might reasonably expect them to have learned from their experience.

Taking meaningful exposure as a starting point it is possible to develop an approach to language teaching which takes advantage of the learner´s natural tendency to make sense of language and to learn for himself.

Regarding controversy relating IT implemented teaching with unmanned teaching, having computers as people substitutes, it is clear that computers are to accompany teachers and not to eliminate them, because of many reasons.

Among these reasons, the uncountable number of variables given in teaching scenarios are not expectable or foreseen, being therefore impossible to pre-program computers to face them since they are programmed by people and, as we said, we cannot predict every scenario teachers might have to come across.

Even though educators are not capable of covering every possibility in advance, they have the inner ability to successfully resolve them as they appear, unlike computers. Thus, being the computing dependence degree of new methodologies higher or lower, both teachers and students are nowhere close to becoming accessory items.

> There are only two components in the learning-teaching process that we cannot do without – the learners and the teachers.
>
> Finocchiaro (1983: 182)

Utilizing different multimedia resources enriches the learning process, making it more sensorial by including visual, auditory and tactile experiences that help content being acquired because of the high levels of motivation related to the application of an eclectic way of learning. Students learning through different media was already highlighted by Richards (1978: 253).

Capturing animated situations on non-animated mediums such as regular books is less efficient than preventing the animation aspect from being eliminated. This can be achieved varying the format that presents the information according to its aspect, utilizing video, audio or animations to better recreate a dynamic situation such as a conversation. According to Celce-Murcia (1979: 41), language situations take on a new dimension when presented in a projected medium.

Students face decoding challenges when reading, so books aiming at reading being practiced and learnt are to include an easily decodable message. This prevents students from frustrating and maintains the engaging effect of the activity, being both factors beneficial for the students.

> Reading is a psycholinguistic process by which the reader, a language user, reconstructs, as best as he can a message which has been encoded by a writer as a graphic display.
>
> Mackay (1989: 5)

It is valid for novel readers to utilize senses other than their sight to decode the message, what is the same, to read. Thus, books are not banned from using multi-sensorial signals which can help readers reach their goal, since according to Hildreth (1958: 2), reading is a mental process involving the interpretation of signs perceived through the sense organs.

In fact, multimedia technologies are totally implementable in new generation books, because the richer the message is in terms of appealing effect and sensorial well-roundness, the better reading learning experience is being offered. The programs must be interactive and motivating in order to capture the pupils' attention; they must be compatible with multimedia, flexible and in color with short and easy captions.

As pointed out by Samuel Ball (1970: 55), senses could be specially important regarding educating children since the learning process depends, mostly, on direct sensorial experiences.

The use of diversified materials reflects an expanding concept of how young children perfect reading skills. Other than the methodology used, the validity and appropriateness of books have a direct effect on the reading learning process. In this sense, Anderson (1985: 147) points out how the materials that are currently being read determine, in large part, current reading abilities and readability findings.

Even though multimedia books are still in their first stages of evolution, it is important to develop them in case they are chosen to evolve reading instruction, because we have seen in the past how traditional books experienced a huge growth in terms of publication numbers. The very same way, multimedia books could experience a similar growth if given enough attention.

> In 1925 the number of new books published in the United States was 445, in 1950, 907, and in 1955, 1,372, an increase of over 300 percent in the 20-year period.
>
> Hildreth (1958: 24)

Multimedia books provide both students and teachers with the possibility of working on several aspects that are not intrinsic to reading, but have a correlation with it and could be developed alongside the pure reading abilities, such as pronunciation or writing exercises.

In the near future, multimedia applications enabling students to compare their voice recordings with standards of pronunciation, automatically correct written sentences showing the mistakes, including virtual reality offering different simulation itineraries to be chosen by the students, would revolutionize language teaching.

The new breed of electronic books including multimedia capabilities is a perfect example of the revolutionary process education is stepping into, using technological revolution for an education revolution, in order to encourage and promote personal and social fulfillment.

The beginning of the audiovisual and Electronic Communications era is a complex process including pedagogy, psychology and sociology, embedding both rational and imaginative aspects, and arising problems of theoretic nature, but also problems linked to materials, techniques or infrastructures, as noted by Decaigny (1974: 5).

Improving the match of texts to readers with nonmainstream cultural backgrounds is an issue that could also be treated taking grasp of the opening of the development of reading material, covering not only skills that were not traditionally included in reading activities, but

also providing minority cultures with appropriate reading material which is appealing to them, in order to work towards a multicultural scenario.

Technology regularly and systemically changes literacy through the evolution of literacy-based technological advances, provoking a transformative change. Technology and literacy also interact and change each other as new technologies generate new potential and implementation initiates variations to the technology, in a transactional change.

Finally, technology and literacy are in a constant state of change, demonstrated through human impact with new technologies, representing a deictic change.

11.1 Curriculum

The curriculum is the tool that needs to regulate and host the integration of computing technologies with educative purposes, but since this implementation is not experimented enough, restriction is not a characteristic that fits in the scene.

On the contrary, flexibility is a must in this field, making the curriculum adaptable to upcoming findings that would appear along with the continuous usage of computing in education.

> The curriculum should provide for flexibility in methodology, but flexibility does not equal ambiguity, and the curriculum needs to shape itineraries of implementations regarding new tools, being clear but not strict at the same time.
>
> Finocchiaro (1983: 59)

The curriculum proposed here has to reflect the combination of two instruction languages, being them the mother tongue of the students and the language they are aiming at learning as a second language. This way, every student shares a common mother tongue and also their linguistic objective.

This would be the situation of most of the regions of Spain, being Spanish the shared mother tongue of the pupils, and English the language to aim at as a second language.

The reason to include both languages, the one already mastered and the one that is still to be mastered as instruction languages, is the fact that learning in a bilingual atmosphere is beneficial when acquiring a second language and a bilingual status as a consequence. In this sense, and quoting Wilkins (1974: 27), "where children are brought up in a consistently bilingual environment, they acquire both languages simultaneously".

If the goal of our methodology were to achieve a detractive situation where the mother tongue disappears in favor of the aimed language, instruction would not include the use of the mother tongue shared by the students.

The goal of our methodology is much more related to bilingualism that it is to a converted monolingualism, since the objective here is to retain the mother tongue and add another language to the capabilities of the students, but not in a subtractive way but in an additive way instead, because of the obvious detrimental factor that losing a language means.

Since children and their schooling development are highly dependent on motivation, and young students are naturally motivated and inclined to be appealed to engaging activities, a curriculum dedicated to accompany the process of acquiring a second language at an early age has to consider motivation as a must. Actually, most children enter school eager, willing, and motivated to learn, as appreciated by Hoffman (1986: 200).

Not every child is to be treated equally at the first stages of schooling, because some students may have been previously enrolled in pre-school activities and programs, causing a positive effect on them that makes them understand the mechanics of a schooling process better than those students without that previous experience.

Hoffman (1986: 200) claims that children who have spent a year or more in preschool enter readily into the give and take of the academic and social interactions appropriate to school, less experienced children hold back.

Thus, it is the educator who is to analyze each situation and consider the amount of school routine training every student actually needs, so that no child is left unattended.

The first stages of schooling in general, and of bilingual schooling in particular, need to prioritize reading over other learning contents due to the fact of reading being necessary for the students to understand contents regardless of the area they are dealing with. In fact, according to Olson (1985: 249), success in school is intimately related to the early acquisition of literacy.

Regarding the aforementioned previous schooling experience of children, and also the motivational factor of instruction, reading is an activity that can easily result in frustration until mastered, unless it is dealt with in an engaging way.

The earlier the contact between a child and a book occurs, the better outcome it is for that child regarding the reading learning process. If a child gets acquainted with at least books, if not reading, at a stage preceding schooling, the success of that child when facing reading activities at school is augmented, and frustration seems more avoidable.

> Children who come to first grade motivated to learn to read will probably learn to read regardless of what method and materials are used. But it is the children who come to first grade with little prior knowledge of the wonders of books for whom motivation is a critical factor.
>
> Anderson (1985: 177)

11.2 Methodology

The vision of teaching reading throughout the implementation of visual clues accompanying texts was foreseen long time ago, and it is now that it really starts blooming. Backing this up is Hildreth (1956: 314), who stated that "perhaps in the future, beginning reading lessons will be taught largely through the combination of televised pictures or movies with accompanying text".

Teaching languages has to be a sensorial activity, including as many senses as possible in the learning process, because retention gets enhanced by apprehending contents from different input sources at the same time, experiencing learning. Thus, it is a commonplace of pedagogy that what is learned through the most senses together will be most readily retained, as explained by Willis (1990: 80).

Computing was long thought of as a far from sensorial tool for learning, but nowadays it allows both teachers and students to utilize different senses by implementing multimedia content. Electronic tools in education open new channels that enable this multiplicity of senses being included in the acquirement process of new contents, placing themselves as everything but a mechanized and non-sensitized item.

Media, by altering the environment, evoke in us unique ratios of sense perceptions. Celce-Murcia (1979: 38) claims that the extension of any one sense alters the way we think and act, the way we perceive the world.

Multimedia activities enrich the density of the learning process, enabling intense instruction that requires much less time than those activities including only one of our senses. This is a key factor because it liberates instruction time to meet other requirements established in the curriculum for each grade level, and it also allows educators to regroup students and offer individualized attention for short periods of time.

Only lessons which exploit a variety of media can approach the kind of information density that is required if the language is to be effectively contextualized within the allotted constraints of time and place.

Reduced instruction is vital in a second language scenario, because it breaks the group dynamic into individualized attention and teaching, covering the specific needs each student shows.

> Pupil-pupil interactions in small groups or in a one-to-one situation offer a number of advantages to second language learners, particularly from a sociolinguistic point of view. For many children such "participant-structures" provide a more culturally congenial means of interacting, permitting cooperative learning as opposed to the competitiveness which often characterizes full class interactions.
>
> Richards (1978: 153)

Group work offers benefits too, but regrouping and flexibility inside a classroom surpasses simple choral teaching, and provides educators with multiple teaching possibilities including individual, reduced groups and choral activities. Alverman (1987: 139) explains how group work can increase students' achievement and encourage positive feelings about learning.

The role of teachers is vital if the educative renewal that implementing IT technologies means is to be successful. Most students are already proficient in new technologies by the time they first enroll in school, because computing is all around them from the very beginning, mainly at home.

It is the role of educators to orientate students towards a practical usage of computing with educational purposes both in and out of school, as well as to self-evaluate how maximized is the profit taken by the school regarding integrating new technologies.

Teachers also play a very important role in motivation, because they are responsible for the learning atmosphere of their groups of students, having it an impact on how engaged and interested pupils are.

An aspect of motivation a teacher can control is the degree of student interest in the lesson, as noted by Hoffman (1986: 235).

Language learners deal with different types of motivation, since the motivation represented by new technologies being used as one of the channels is accompanied by the motivation of learning a language to achieve social integration and, at the same time, to make use of that language.

Alcón (2002: 78) explains how the attitude towards language and motivation are considered inseparable elements, being integrative and instrumental motivation differed. Integrative motivation implies individuals wishing to learn a language to get integrated in a linguistic community, whereas instrumental motivation makes learners study a language because of the short term utility of it.

Since the usage of new technologies is extremely appealing to students in general, and to children in particular, because of the resemblance using them has to playing games, educators face in them a great opportunity to maximize and maintain the attention of the students by including them as a channel contents can be taught through.

Camcorders, although not being commonly used in education, are beginning to be implemented because they have a great motivating and engaging effect on students in general, and in children in particular, due to the immediateness of the recording, which students and teachers can watch and utilize right away.

When teaching youngsters, considering positive reinforcement as a valid tool to avoid frustration is an understatement. Mistakes and errors are prone to appear at the very first stages

of the linguistic learning process, and it is the responsibility of the teacher to help students overcome them without falling into frustration stages, understanding that learning is a long and progressive process that demands dedication. In fact, according to Hoffman (1986: 239), positive reinforcement should be a regular and conscious aspect of effective teaching.

Using new methods related to new technologies does not mean discarding traditional methods. Actually, the wider a variety of instruments and approaches is regarding education, the better learning process students will experience.

> We must adopt an approach to language teaching that is sufficiently rich in the variety of devices that it exploits for the learner to have the freedom to adopt whatever learning strategy suits him best.
>
> Wilkins (1974: 85)

Traditionally, language teaching has not been a visual area of learning, because texts were utilized mainly for translation purposes and linguistic patterns being inferred from them. It is now that communication is being given more relevance that languages are taught by means of not only texts but also images, making learning fun and involving different senses in the process.

For most people the left hemisphere is the one that produces words, and the right hemisphere, by contrast, deals in whole images. Stevick (1982: 31) states that traditional methods in education have fed the left half of the brain much more than they have fed the right, and have also made their greatest demands on the left hemisphere.

Images reinforce texts, providing them with new dimensions that complement them making texts a better teaching tool. Retention benefits from the power of images, which place the ideas that their referents are associated with in the brain of the learners. Genuine language is a two-sided combination of form and meaning, and we should therefore minimize the occasions when students look at the form alone.

According to Stevick (1982: 31), a new item needs only one intense experience in order to attain status in the permanent memory. Its chances of receiving the necessary intensity increase with the total number of exposures, the number of exposures can be greater the longer the image stays in the long term memory, the chances of transmitting a clear and full image to the long term memory are in turn increased by repeating the item several times and thus re-entering it into the short term memory, putting it back on the tabletop where it can be worked on again and again.

Sight words are learnt best through the usage of flashcards including images to be associated with specific words. Picture dictionaries are also beneficial for the understanding and memorization of words that novice readers have to overcome. Following suit with this idea is Alverman (1987: 73), who claims that visualizing the concepts represented by words has been demonstrated to be a useful device for understanding and remembering word meanings.

> The benefits of using picture dictionaries surpass the mere understanding and memorization of words, easing the acquisition process of reading abilities. Teachers find that children in the second and third grades learn to read, write, and spell more easily with the aid of a picture dictionary.
>
> Hildreth (1958: 332)

Traditional dictionaries have a lack of engaging effects that are necessary for children who are yet to achieve literacy. They are positive tools yet, but their orientation fits adult learners best. Going even further is Mackay (1989: 11), who claims that "one can question the habitual use of the dictionary because it tends to slow down the reading process".

Given that image rich methodologies are only blooming after many years of absence, the visual capabilities new multimedia technologies have are emphasizing the powerful effect images represent for language learners, enabling teachers to enrich their content display. In fact, according to Chadwick (1975: 53) multimedia resources represent a big help for the presentations of teachers.

Without proper training and both curriculum and methodologies being adapted and implemented, the visual potential of new multimedia technologies is diminished, because unplanned usage of new technologies is much less effective than a carefully regulated and preconceived application of such valid technologic tools.

Integrating video when teaching is not accomplished just by acquiring multimedia elements, as explained by Ferrés (1990: 125)

11.3 Computing

The absence of certain resources will place serious limitations on what the teacher can achieve. An awareness of what resources are available is necessary from the beginning of a teaching operation.

Resources are not an adjunct, but an integral part of the learning situation. Their availability offers opportunities to the teacher. The lack of them imposes restrictions which may mean that his pupils cannot be set the objectives that he would like them to reach and cannot be taught by the methods that would otherwise be the most suitable.

The incorporation of new technologies in the school context to improve the quality of the teaching and learning processes and to achieve the training of the new generations with the use of these technologies is vital.

Computers were not considered as feasible educative tools to be implemented at school in the past mainly because of their high price. First computers were really expensive, and their computing power did not follow suit because it was improvable, to say the least. One of the main reasons advising against using technology is, obviously, the costs derived from hardware expenditures.

> What is needed, referring to the National Engineering Academy, is a low cost unit, compact and capable of utilizing an operating system simple enough for students without any special training.
>
> Armsey (1975: 28)

Luckily, with the arrival of microelectronics, the scenario changed dramatically. Sizes of computers reduced along with their prices, while computing power increased enormously, turning humongous and pricy computers into tiny powerful devices that were affordable and much eligible for academic implementation.

Lately, thanks to microelectronics, the real cost of computers has plummeted, and the size and energy demand has also lowered, being processing power and reliability incremented at the same time, along with a flourishing of computing applications and an improvement in the interface field, simplifying their use and making them accessible to people who lack training, as noted by Hawkridge (1985: 19)

What is even more shocking is to witness how computers, having been discarded because of being too expensive in the past, are now considered as an option to lower the costs of education, because not only have they become affordable machines, but they are also capable of reducing collateral costs such as paper books.

These can be replaced by cheaper electronic versions which are usable on those very same computers, apart from including several aspects that traditional books cannot cover, improving the teaching possibilities and the quality of education while doing so.

Nowadays, a new education oriented technology is being developed not only to make education affordable but also to contribute to its quality, as explained by Apter (1976: 8).

According to Hameyer (1989: 129), although microcomputers have reached schools, they have had little impact on many areas of the curriculum.

Tablets currently represent the pinnacle of portable micro-computing, fitting the educational demands perfectly, but they come a long way since they were first ambitioned and worked upon.

California is a key place regarding tablets being developed, because it was in Palo Alto where one of the origins of current tablets can be found when looking at the work Xerox dedicated in that field long time ago.

In California, USA, at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center in the 1970s, Alan Kay led a group of talented researchers with a single vision: to design and build the Dynabook, a multimedia computer the size and shape of an ordinary notebook, as explained by Bertram (2003: 47).

Lately, the Cupertino based Apple computing company is leading the market, and their commercialization of the iPad tablet series has revolutionized the concept, closing the circle of the Californian tablet development, which is probably nothing but the very beginning of it.

In the time iPad was yet to arrive, based on the Dynobook Xerox proposed, other companies achieved remarkable goals in that field, incorporating updated features improving those of their predecessors in every aspect, boosting the possibilities of such devices.

In a press release issued in January 1999, as explained by Bertram (2003: 48), the Fujitsu company announced the Stylistic 2300, a tablet computer the size, shape, and weight of a large-format book, with a new color "sunlight" display for reading outdoors, pen input, stereophonic sound, and a screen that can show full-motion video.

Many differences set apart the first pioneering tablet models from the ones presently utilized, but in terms of educational implementation, three features that have changed the game can be listed.

First, affordability keeps popularizing the access students have to education, balancing the possibilities of owning a tablet and, therefore, educating themselves in and out of school. A proof of the improvement achieved in the affordability field reside in the ratios of students per computer in the American schools, which has hugely changed in a relatively short period of time, unveiling how a rising number of computers has lately been purchased by schools.

Referring to the database of the U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment, in 1981 there were, on average, 125 students per computer in the United States. In 1991, there were 18 students per computer, so it is safe to state that the school use of computers has spread deeply.

Another important development tablets have undergone is portability, regarding their size and weight, and obviously their battery life which make them independent from any table, dock or outlet. This reinvents the restrictions of traditional education since learning can happen not only on a desk but anywhere else, even while moving around, making learning compatible with the developing of other activities at the same time. In this sense, as stated by Cavanaugh (2006: 40), handheld devices solve the problem of having to read in a specific location and in a specific body position.

Portability also breaks the traditional usage of computers as individual and static learning stations located in class, since computer assisted activities can now be developed in class.

The third feature standing out is the incorporation of touch screens, because they make interaction of students with the computers seem natural. Children benefit extraordinarily from this invention, because they feel capable of creating input without tedious previous training, just by reacting in an uncanny way before the multimedia clues emitted by the device. The relevance of the touch screen was highlighted by Sharp (1996: 312), who considered it plays a key role in the educational use of the computer.

As important as the development of new technologies are educators making use of them and software implemented by the new hardware devices. Without properly trained teachers and suitable software, computers are mere accessories which are underexploited, instead of meaningful channel of instruction.

According to Carbonara (2005: 149), penetration of technology into schools does not necessarily guarantee access and use, since for those individual students who use computers, they spend on average, a little more than one hour a week using them, which means four percent of all instructional time.

Teachers are to accompany the development of new technologies, which are eligible for academic implementation, with a renewal of their computing knowledge and a revision of their teaching styles in order to make room for the innovations to transform into a reality in class, to be prepared to lead such innovative activities, and to not fall behind slowing down the technological boost currently blooming, avoiding to become outdated educative items because, quoting Stevick (1982: 118), the machine is only as good as the people who control it.

The best way to recycle themselves as contemporary teachers, in what has been called a new technological era, is through serious and continuous training to sharp their skills and become technologically proficient enough to implement the usage of new devices at school.

In the United States, official bodies such as the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) are concerned with accrediting teacher preparation programs and promoting appropriate technology use in education.

Computers are not proposed as substitutes for teachers but rather as supporting devices for their explanations, classroom management and tutoring, being the latter the only area where deep self-sufficiency could be developed.

Software is to meet the demands of teachers, which appear according to the specific needs students show, which teachers aim at covering. Thus, if both group and individual activities are being ambitioned, software has to maximize the hardware possibilities of tablets to fit best the demands, guaranteeing a beneficial socializing effect by doing so.

The software must be socializing, allowing its use by small groups, without missing out on its individual development aim.

At the same time, software developers need to include different tiers or itineraries inside every educative application promoted in schools, so that students with different background knowledge, linguistic abilities or computing skills, departing from totally different starting points in the consumption of such programs, are equally assisted breaking with standardized instruction in favor of individualized flexibility.

The software has to be flexible and must allow the pupil to jump one or several steps, so he can quickly begin to work at another point of application.

Software applications must meet the interactivity requisite needed to achieve the ambitioned engaging instruction, because new devices are motivating per se, and software being implemented is to preserve that capacity and not to spoil it by putting students through tedious working sessions lacking in feedback.

> In order to keep students attention and increase their involvement in the learning activity, software developers should design software that is interactive in nature and that immediate feedback is to be provided whenever possible and appropriate. Interactivity is a key issue in instructional software development.
>
> Posteguillo (2001: 201)

Software developers must take into account how hardware prices have lowered to the point of making computers a feasible academic aid for school budgets to afford, due to the application of microelectronics, which at the same time not only cheapens devices but also boosts their characteristics.

Educative software programs to be implemented at school are to follow suit and sell at affordable prices, because hardware already did and also because the budget reductions meant by using electronic versions of books instead of decaying paper books which have to be refurbished, or manuals which have to be updated, or workbooks which have to be replaced, would be meaningless otherwise.

The provision of high-quality, reasonably priced educational software is the principal technological challenge, since low-cost hardware is already widely available to most homes, offices and schools.

Computing can be helpful when utilized to work on students and their capability of correlating sounds and lettering, because even though English is not a phonetic language with a direct association of graphemes and phonemes, listening to words being pronounced while reading them is beneficial for the comprehension and retention stages involved in the reading learning process.

Image applied language teaching is especially functional when extensive use of L2 is demanded, since images accompanying words eases comprehension and prevents translation, avoiding ambiguity while comprehending.

> At the very same time students watch the image of a word or a phrase being displayed by means of a projector, they can listen to the correct pronunciation of the displayed contents, or even learn how to pronounce it by looking at an animated image modelling the correct way of doing it.
>
> Domínguez (2006: 43)

This is not a new tool that had not been used before, but new technologies substituting cassette players accompanying traditional books reunite both aspects in only one channel which is more portable, lighter, and capable of providing immediacy among many other upgrades represented by the appearance of electronic books being displayed in tablets at school.

Language teaching is known for traditionally pioneering in the use of multimedia, as it has integrated audio recordings for a better development of the listening comprehension on the students, and video recordings, by the 1980s, adding gestures and captions to the audio, which are still utilized nowadays.

According to Celce-Murcia (1979: 125), listening comprehension is, without a doubt, the most important skill in learning a new language. Understanding a language is a prerequisite to speaking, reading, and writing that language. Commercial or teacher-made tapes accompanied by written texts can provide preliterate students with opportunities to hear their new language and see the written words that they are hearing.

Apart from being much more convenient than traditional combination of devices for auditory and visual clues used to read while listening to the text at the same time, tablets also bring a renewed motivational effect to this activity by the mere fact of machines appealing to young students, who frequently are willing to read on a machine because they believe in the power of machinery.

Computing devices appeal to students promoting a motivating learning scenario because the students are familiarized with their use, since most of them have access to them at home, and also because of these devices eliminating the fear of embarrassment that group interaction poses. Errors are not only acceptable but also necessary in every learning process, but errors checked privately by individualized attention of teachers, or by individualized usage of tablets running software capable of correcting the user, are less feared by students than public and choral correction in front of numerous judging partners.

Computer usage represents an engaging element for the student since it is traditionally associated with leisure situations where students interact autonomously with different multimedia tools they have certain control over.

> Not being held back is also an important factor achieved by computer usage, given that many students are prone to communicate using new technologies to avoid being scared of rejection, or even the embarrassment that comes along with failure in traditional educational activities.
>
> Domínguez (2006: 23)

Elementary oriented software usually displays a game resembling interface, which maximizes the appealing effect new technology has on young students, making learning fun. Software makes the very same device appeal to totally different aged users by adapting the appearance of the interface to the expectancies of students.

According to Ferrés (1990: 40), it seems clear that learning through the implementation of games is still one of the most appealing methods in the eyes of the students, specially for young pupils.

Educators have the opportunity and the responsibility of turning the appealing effect new technologies have on students to their favor, grasping the opportunities brought by the opening of new channels to improve instruction effectiveness. Productivity is a historic goal in education which seems renewed with the application of new technologies in education.

Teachers, as explained by Obrist (1985: 14), have the opportunity to utilize the enthusiasm microcomputers provoke on students as a real learning aid.

Even though present computers are nothing like what computers were twenty years ago, books have not undergone the same process of renewal until now, when along with the print format, a digital version is rapidly growing, offering teachers new advantages and options.

One of these advantages is the size of digital books, because while the average middle school student in the United States carries more than twenty pounds in a book bag, doctors suggest that in order to avoid physical injury people should never carry more than ten percent of their body weight.

Hardware devices supporting electronic books weight as little as a pound, and a gigabyte of memory could contain more than two hundred illustrated college reference books in PDF format, representing not only a cost-effective but also health-conscious alternative, as explained by Cavanaugh (2006: 2).

Many more are the advantages of using electronic books instead of paper books. Among them, electronic books offer editing options that paper books lack, and electronic books offer connectivity because hyperlinks represent a window in and out of traditional texts, joining different volumes or contents, or activating subsidiary options such as dictionary entries complementing the words of a text, or a reader pronouncing them out loud.

Books are consumable items, schools buy new books every year, which represents a big chunk of the school budget, resulting in monetary problems that could be solved through the digitalization of books utilized at school.

> The cost of textbooks in recent years has risen into the double digits, being reported by University that from 1983 to 1993, campus textbook costs increased more than ninety percent, and from 1998 to 2006 textbook costs have risen an additional forty-one percent.
>
> Cavanaugh (2006: 40)

The benefits of using electronic books as opposed to paper books are not only related to budgeting, but some of them are economic and are not to be underrated because of the relevance of school funding.

The Internet Public Library, an educational initiative from the University of Michigan's School of Information, claims to have links to more than 40,000 e-books that can be read online or downloaded for free, providing teachers with numerous texts to give students at no cost.

Other benefits are based on the fact of widening the spectrum of books to be selected, since the restriction represented by the availability of any given paper book in bookstores, which are not always offering the book educators need, is overcome by having the possibility of acquiring electronic books worldwide, making almost no book impossible to purchase.

Teaching reading in foreign languages is a specific area that requires specific books that are often far from being mainstream books, and cataloguing them is not guaranteed in most local bookstores, which do not use to stock them, but teachers can use online libraries from around the world to provide reading materials that students can use for practice within their target language.

Some electronic sources contain children oriented e-books in many languages, which help both teachers and students. Educators have a big corpus of books to choose from to help them teach reading, and students have access to many downloadable reading books to practice their reading at home, surpassing the traditional limits posed by the school library and the volumes they offer to students. Case in point, the International Children's Digital Library has children's books in more than twenty-seven languages.

In order for teachers to correctly implement the usage of electronic books at school, Universities are including training which is related to that matter, so that educators are really capable of putting electronic books in practice back in school.

According to Cavanaugh (2006: 6), the College of Education and Human Services at the University of Florida is implementing a program in which undergraduate reading and ESL courses educate students concerning e-books, having them read one e-book of their choice plus another e-book that would be appreciated for children that they expect to teach.

12. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

12.1 Why implementing guided reading in Spanish Elementary schools?

Spanish education is undergoing a progressive change towards a multilingual scenario where languages are first taught at earlier stages of schooling than they were in the past. This responds to the progressive internationalization Spain has been experiencing as a member of the European Economic Community first, and a member of the European Union later on, which contains 24 official languages being used throughout the 28 states considered members of the Union.

Other European countries have developed multilingual societies earlier than Spain has, and it has mainly been accomplished by empowering the early instruction of English at their schools.

It is now, over 50 years after the treaty of Paris, that Spain is acknowledging the importance of English as an international communicative tool. Europeans have steadily arrived to Spain from different countries, claiming their right to work, and bringing new needs along with their arrival, mainly regarding linguistics.

Since it is not strange now to communicate with people who came from other countries inside the European Union, and it is recently being less strange for Spaniards to move out of the country looking for international opportunities, schooling is not to turn a blind eye on this new society, but to update in order to accommodate to it.

Foreign languages have been traditionally dealt with late in the curriculum in Spanish schools, because of having a different need and exposure than what Spain presently has. Outdated methodologies and approaches do not meet the demands anymore, so new methods scaffolding a renewed instruction are necessary.

Guided reading has been long used in bilingual scenarios in the US, proving to be a successful approach enabling students to learn foreign languages at the earliest stages of education.

Therefore, promoting the implementation of guided reading as one resource to be considered when renewing the instruction of foreign languages in Spain seemed natural to me, mainly after experiencing the benefits of guided reading instruction myself back in 2005 when I worked for the Rockford Public Schools system in Illinois, and implementing guided reading in order to teach English to Spanish speaking students was part of my daily tasks.

12.2 Guided reading criticism

Several aspects of guided reading have traditionally been criticized, namely the dispute between those considering it an instructing tool and those who believe it is merely an assessing tool. Nowadays, guided reading is widely used in US schools, not as an assessing tool but as a methodology applied to language teaching in general, and to foreign language teaching in particular.

The role of teachers in guided reading sessions has also been doubted, because teachers implementing guided reading are expected to facilitate and not to lead, and sometimes these two roles may be misunderstood. Instead of teaching comprehension, which is the core of guided reading, some educators tend to focus on assessing students, resulting in a diminishing action that converts the role of guided reading teachers from facilitators to evaluators.

Certain critics minimize guided reading sessions by considering it mere hearing sessions where a teacher hears a child read, not considering it a teaching method as a consequence. Obviously, guided reading includes much more than hearing children read, because aiming at a balanced reading situation, as this methodology does, implies an integral consideration of reading, writing, phonics or word study, to name just a few.

Finally, guided reading has also been criticized because of the Fountas and Pinnell consideration regarding student-book placements. Fountas and Pinnell believed that kids should be placed in books they can read with better than 90% accuracy and with high reading comprehension, whereas critics prefer placing students in more challenging books, presenting a higher frustration range for the readers, alleging that by doing this, the progress of the students would be greater.

12.3 The interviewing process

In order to properly design a questionnaire, its creation was achieved following three different stages, taking into consideration the identification of the objectives, the setting of secondary topics, and the formulation of the questions.

The aim of the questionnaire was basically checking the perception of administrators who are in daily contact with bilingual education in general, and with guided reading in particular, on the possibility of guided reading techniques being mass imported into Spanish public elementary schools.

Secondary topics were also established targeting the opinion of the interviewees on the possibility of implementing different bilingual programs into Spain so that multilingual scenarios are best reached throughout schooling.

Other topics that are treated in this dissertation were also utilized as secondary topics for the conducted interviews, such as legal framework matters or the application of new technologies with instructional purposes.

The degree of success and effectiveness of interviews mainly depends on the way questions are formulated. Thus, every question should strike the interviewee as meaningful, being formulated using a standard version of the language, avoiding mistakes and vagueness while doing so. Personal matters are also not desired when creating a questionnaire, and questions are to include single ideas not to be misleading. Needless to say, biased questions are not allowed in formal research interviews, so the standpoint of the author is always going to be neutral.

Simple, fresh and attractive designs are strongly recommended, as it is interactivity when dealing with interviews, so that interviewees feel comfortable answering the questions as if conversing.

The balance of open and closed questions should also be taken into account, enabling interviewees to combine answering freely and subjectively to open questions, but also to select whatever options the questions may propose. It is the interviewer who needs to choose when to utilize open or closed questions, depending on the matter being discussed, and the nature of the information being pursued, always aiming at providing the interviewee with the best framework possible for each answer.

Short questions have been chosen in order to ease the answering process while avoiding vagueness while doing so. Bearing the aforementioned ease in mind, a progression is visible regarding the relation between the order of the questions and their difficulty of being answered, delaying complicated questions so that smoothness is well looked upon.

The objectives of the dissertation were considered when elaborating the questionnaires, searching for those questions leading us to relevant clarifications on our research topics. Dynamicity was achieved by varying the typology of the questions included in the interviews not to discomfort interviewees while providing us with appropriate answers.

Once the interviews were conducted, they were analyzed and evaluated to extract authorized information to be included in the analysis of gathered data.

12.4 Analysis and results

After collecting the reading progress of third graders both in Spain and in the United States of America, with the help of the American School of Valencia, and John Nelson Elementary School, respectively, data contrast was initiated utilizing statistic procedures because

of the reliability and accuracy of the method, trying to prove the validity of the hypothesis being thrown prior to the analysis.

Since all the students were third graders, the ages of the students were between eight and nine years old, so homogeneity in this aspect was clear.

Another aspect shared by most of the students was the fact of having Spanish as their mother tongue, although this characteristic was not definitive for the research because the guided reading sessions were conducted in English. Some ASV students are not Spanish students, being them from countries with official languages other than Spanish.

What was actually definitive was the relative capability of the students in terms of reading comprehension in English, being this necessary for the reading sessions to succeed. Thus, having English as a second language was a requisite to be met by the totality of the students analyzed here.

Obviously, after reviewing the reading levels the students were performing at by the beginning of third grade, this entering score revealed how students had different English language knowledge levels, having this an impact on the study, but it also provided us with interesting information regarding individual progressions.

Another aspect worth mentioning before looking into the scoring of the students is the geographical difference experienced by the students, being half of them in Spain and the other half on US soil. The predominant English variety used for schooling in Spain is British English in general, and Received Pronunciation in particular, whereas the mid-west state of Illinois,

where John Nelson Elementary School is located at, is obviously using American English at school.

This should not be perceived as a barrier for our research because guided reading techniques are not divided according to any specific English variety or accent, they respond to a holistic approach which improves communicative competences.

On top of that, most of the students do not come from English native speaking families, so they have to generate learning options themselves out of the exposure they are granted with by their schools.

When analyzing the statistical results from the reading progression of every third grader included in the study, both centralization and dispersion measures are to be taken in order to convert data into numbers showing interesting behavioral patterns.

Identifying the lowest and highest figures representing reading progress, and detecting the average progress and the deviations between the aforementioned extremes regarding guided reading lettering advances, grouping becomes available.

The average reading progress of third graders under guided reading instruction both in Nelson Elementary School and in the American School of Valencia results from adding each individual reading achievement to later divide it by the total number of students being analyzed. The median value is also studied, representing the central value if the corpus contains an odd number of results or the division of the two central values if the corpus contains an even number

of results, along with other concepts as the minimum and maximum value inside obtained by the students, and the difference in value between both ends, being it called range.

Obtaining these references is vital to test the validity of the hypothesis being thrown in this dissertation, prior to the data gathering and analyzing process, which hypothesized about the validity of American guided reading techniques being imported into the Spanish educational system as a tool to achieve successful second language teaching at the earliest stages of schooling.

A secondary hypothesis theorized about the idea of an IT implemented guided reading methodology meeting the same demands but fitting best in the reality of the moment, but due to the lack of data based on the results of digitalizing guided reading, it is still early for this theory to be tested. Time will tell about the validity of this hypothesis, because some selected schools are both experimenting and planning to include new technologies in their guided reading sessions in the near future.

It is important to take into account how our hypothesis cannot be considered fully proven by means of statistical analysis since the gathered data being studied only represents a mere sample. Rejecting hypothesis because of being refuted by the results or achieving statistical inferences is possible though, because generalizations and deductions based on samples are considered valid approaches.

12.4.1 Nelson 2007-2008 bilingual third graders

As I personally experienced back in 2007 by working for the school, Nelson bilingual third graders utilize the entrance and exit benchmarks established by Fountas and Pinnell, being

them N level as the third grade entrance benchmark, and Q level as the third grade exit benchmark.

Lettering established by Fountas and Pinnell is usually correlated by numbers indicating the Developmental Reading Assessment or DRA, being in this case 30 and 38 the numeric DRA benchmarks indicating entrance and exit levels at ASV.

Out of the total 19 students analyzed from the third grade classes selected from the John Nelson Elementary School, two students began third grade reading at DRA 18, meaning Fountas and Pinnell J level, which is the reading level they were expected to be by the beginning of second grade, so they were exactly one grade level behind regarding their reading capabilities, although they were both diagnosed with learning disorders and received special education visiting assistance both in Reading and Math.

Nine students began third grade reading at DRA 20 level, meaning Fountas and Pinnell K level, which is the reading level assigned by the middle of the second grade level, so they were behind what their reading level should be according to the Nelson third grade entering reading benchmark.

A DRA of 28, which means Fountas and Pinnell M level, was scored by other seven students by the time they began third grade at ASV, being this level indicated as the exit second grade reading level benchmark, not the third grade entrance one, meaning they were almost at the expected DRA by September 2007.

One Nelson student achieved DRA 30, meaning Fountas and Pinnell N level, by the time this student started third grade. This student was exactly at the reading level expected by their school.

This means that one student out of nineteen, representing 5.3% of the total, met the reading expectations by the beginning of third grade. Not a single student exceeded the reading benchmark by the time they entered third grade. Consequently, eighteen students, representing 94.7% of the total, did not meet or exceed the reading expectations for students starting third grade at Nelson in 2007.

By the end of third grade, one student reached DRA 28, meaning Fountas and Pinnell M level, being this the end of second grade reading benchmark, so these students were exactly one grade level behind according to their reading abilities.

Six students reached a DRA of 30 by the time they finished third grade, which represents Fountas and Pinnell N level, being this the benchmark established by the time students start third grade. This fact establishes that these students reached, by the end of third grade, a reading level they should be at when commencing third grade.

Seven students ended third grade reading at DRA 34 level, meaning Fountas and Pinnell O level, which is the middle of third grade expected benchmark. These students fell slightly short of meeting or exceeding their benchmarks of expectation by the time third they finished third grade.

Four students met the expectations of Nelson Elementary School, reaching a reading level of DRA 38, which is represented by Fountas and Pinnell P level, being this the end of third grade established reading benchmark.

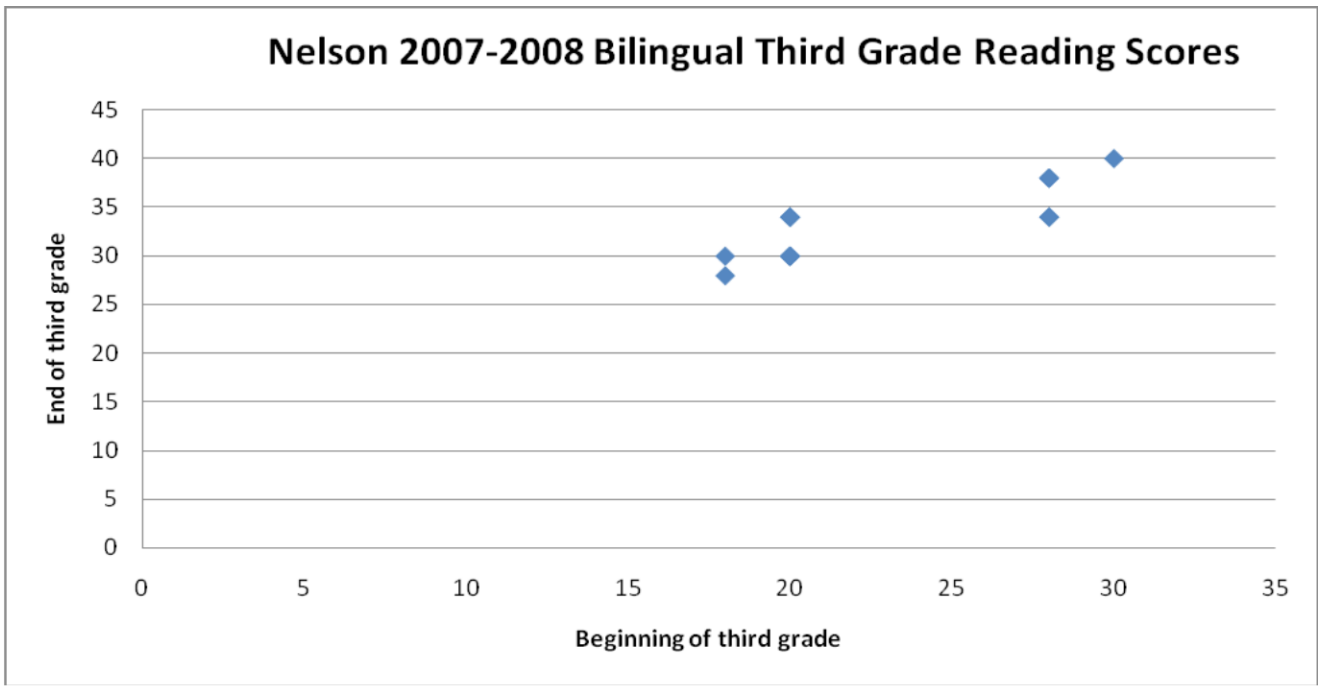
Out of nineteen students, one of them exceeded the Nelson Elementary School reading expectations, reaching a DRA 40 reading level, which means Fountas and Pinnell Q level. This student was an overachiever since this student ended third grade reading at a level that is expected by students entering fourth grade.

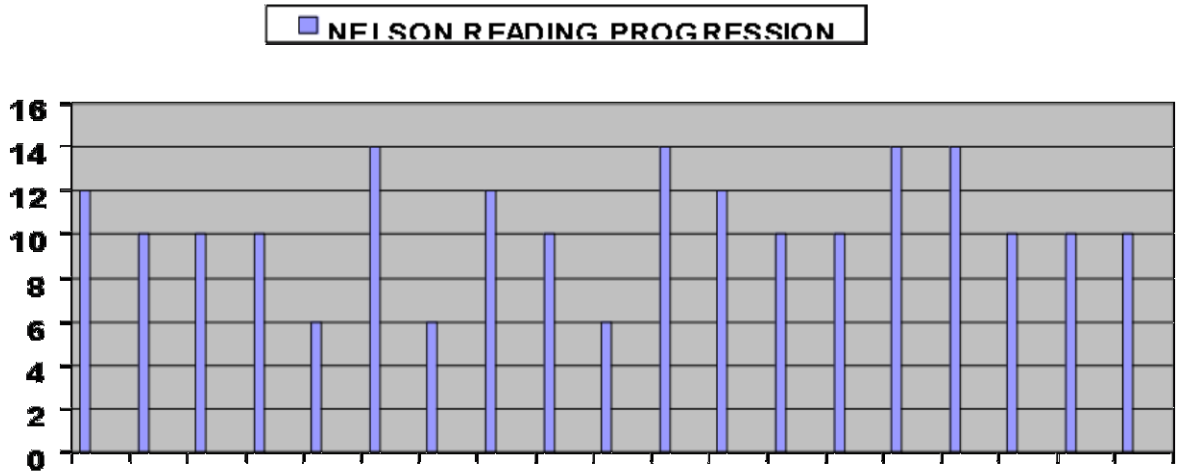
This means that four students out of nineteen, representing 21% of the total, met the reading expectations by the end of third grade. Only one student, representing 5.3% of the students, exceeded the reading benchmark by the time this student exited third grade. Consequently, fourteen students, representing 73.6% of the total, did not meet or exceed the reading expectations for students finishing third grade at Nelson in 2008.

Regarding the individual reading progress of the students under guided reading instruction, the number of students reading at the expected levels for their age, according to the established benchmarks, raised from 5.3% to 21%, representing a 15.7% increase. Despite being low figures, a sensible improvement was achieved utilizing guided reading techniques.

Consequently, students not meeting the reading benchmarks decreased from 94.7% to 73.6%, representing a 21.1% drop.

The number of overachiever students exceeding the reading benchmarks of expectancy also ascended from 0% to 5.3%, representing a significant 5.3% increase.





Taking into account that third graders are supposed to improve their reading by eight Fountas and Pinnell reading levels throughout the academic year (students should start third grade reading at reading level 30 and finish this grade level reading at level 38), it is possible to analyze the population of students in terms of adequate or inadequate readers according to their reading progression being lower than eight Fountas and Pinnell reading levels or not.

The lowest value recorded when checking the progression of the 2007-2008 Nelson bilingual third graders was 6, and the highest progression value recorded was 14, giving us the minimum and maximum of this study.

The average of the progression in this group is 10.5, which is over the expected progression of 8 Fountas and Pinnell reading levels for each student. Median in this group is 10, which is also over the aforementioned reading progression expectancy. Finally, it can be established that the range is 8, representing the distance between the lowest and highest values in the results.

12.4.2 ASV 2012-2013 monolingual third graders

According to Kristy Beam, Preschool and Elementary principal at the American School of Valencia, ASV third graders utilize the entrance and exit benchmarks established by Fountas and Pinnell, being them N level as the third grade entrance benchmark, and Q level as the third grade exit benchmark.

Lettering established by Fountas and Pinnell is usually correlated by numbers indicating the Developmental Reading Assessment or DRA, being in this case 30 and 38 the numeric DRA benchmarks indicating entrance and exit levels at ASV.

Out of the total 54 students analyzed from the two third grade classes selected from the American School of Valencia, fifteen began third grade reading at DRA 20 level, meaning Fountas and Pinnell K level, which is the reading level assigned by the middle of the second

grade level, so they were behind what their reading level should be according to the ASV third grade entering reading benchmark.

Other fifteen students began third grade scoring a DRA of 24, meaning Fountas and Pinnell L reading level, which is the reading level assigned two thirds of second grade in, so they were slightly behind in their reading capabilities.

A DRA of 28, which means Fountas and Pinnell M level, was scored by other fifteen students by the time they began third grade at ASV, being this level indicated as the exit second grade reading level benchmark, not the third grade entrance one, meaning they were almost at the expected DRA by September 2012.

Seven ASV students achieved DRA 30, meaning Fountas and Pinnell N level, by the time they started third grade. These students were exactly at the reading level expected by their school.

Two students began third grade reading at DRA 34, meaning Fountas and Pinnell O level, which is the reading level they were expected to be by the middle of third grade, so they were overachievers that were half a grade level ahead regarding their reading capabilities.

This means that nine students out of fifty-four, representing 16.6% of the total, met the reading expectations by the beginning of third grade. Only two students, representing 3.7% of the students, exceeded the reading benchmark by the time they entered third grade. Consequently, forty-five students, representing 83.3% of the total, did not meet or exceed the reading expectations for students starting third grade at ASV in 2012.

By the end of third grade, two students were still reading at a DRA 20 level, meaning Fountas and Pinnell K level, which is a middle of second grade reading level. Consequently, these two students were significant underachievers, taking into account that the end of third grade reading benchmark is DRA 38, meaning Fountas and Pinnell P level. These students ended third grade one grade level and a half behind according to their reading capabilities.

Eight students ended third grade reading at DRA 24, which represents Fountas and Pinnell L level, being this reading level expected three quarters into second grade, so these students were slightly over one grade level behind in reading.

Seven students reached DRA 28, meaning Fountas and Pinnell M level, being this the end of second grade reading benchmark, so these students were exactly one grade level behind according to their reading abilities.

Six students reached a DRA of 30 by the time they finished third grade, which represents Fountas and Pinnell N level, being this the benchmark established by the time students start third grade. This fact establishes that these students reached, by the end of third grade, a reading level they should be at when commencing third grade.

Eighteen students ended third grade reading at DRA 34 level, meaning Fountas and Pinnell O level, which is the middle of third grade expected benchmark. These students fell slightly short of meeting or exceeding their benchmarks of expectation by the time third they finished third grade.

Seven students met the expectations of the American School of Valencia, reaching a reading level of DRA 38, which is represented by Fountas and Pinnell P level, being this the end of third grade established reading benchmark.

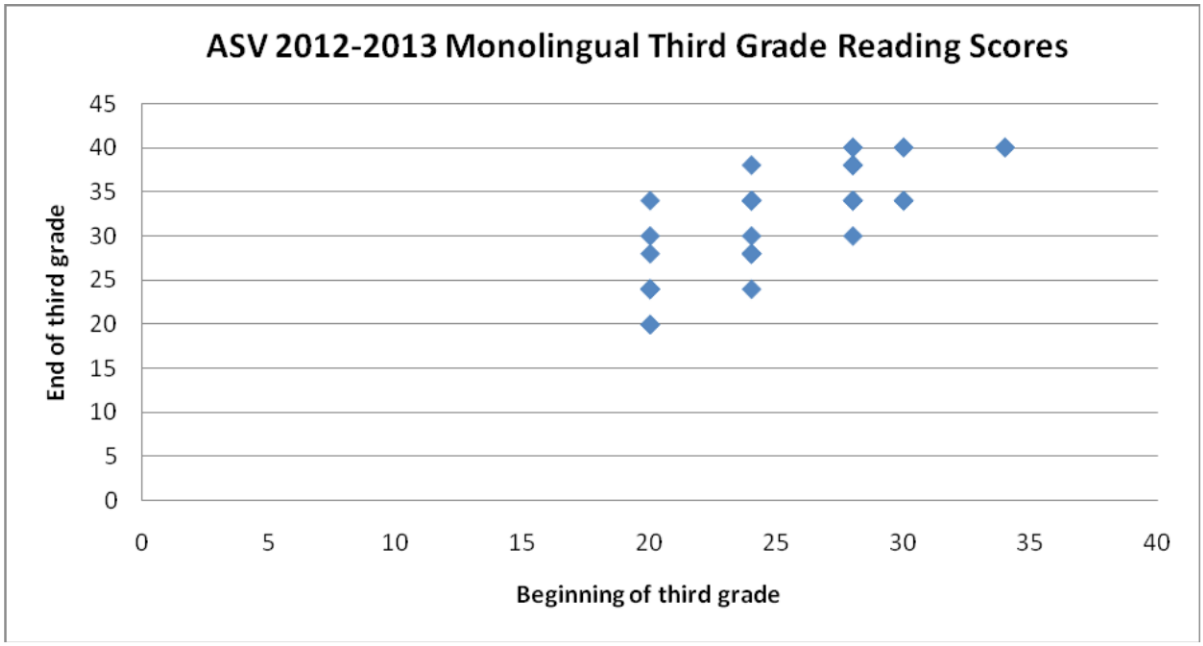
Out of fifty-four students, six of them exceeded the ASV reading expectations, reaching a DRA 40 reading level, which means Fountas and Pinnell Q level. These students were overachievers since they ended third grade reading at a level that is expected by students entering fourth grade.

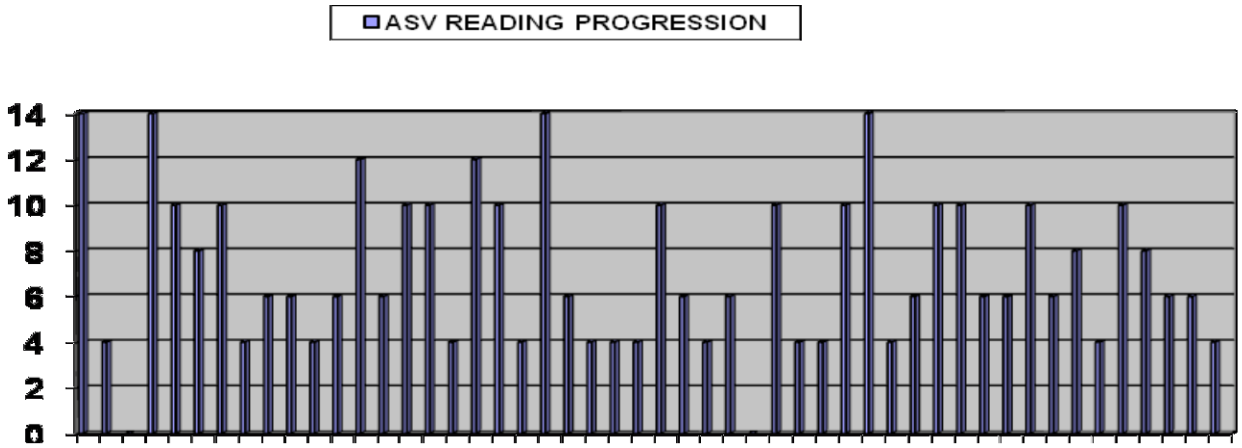
This means that thirteen students out of fifty-four, representing 24% of the total, met the reading expectations by the end of third grade. Only six students, representing 11.1% of the students, exceeded the reading benchmark by the time they exited third grade. Consequently, forty-one students, representing 75.9% of the total, did not meet or exceed the reading expectations for students finishing third grade at ASV in 2013.

Regarding the individual reading progress of the students under guided reading instruction, the number of students reading at the expected levels for their age, according to the established benchmarks, raised from 16.6% to 24%, representing a 7.4% increase. Despite being low figures, a sensible improvement was achieved utilizing guided reading techniques.

Consequently, students not meeting the reading benchmarks decreased from 83.3% to 75.9%, representing a 7.4% drop.

The number of overachiever students exceeding the reading benchmarks of expectancy also ascended from 3.7% to 11%, representing a significant 7.3% increase.





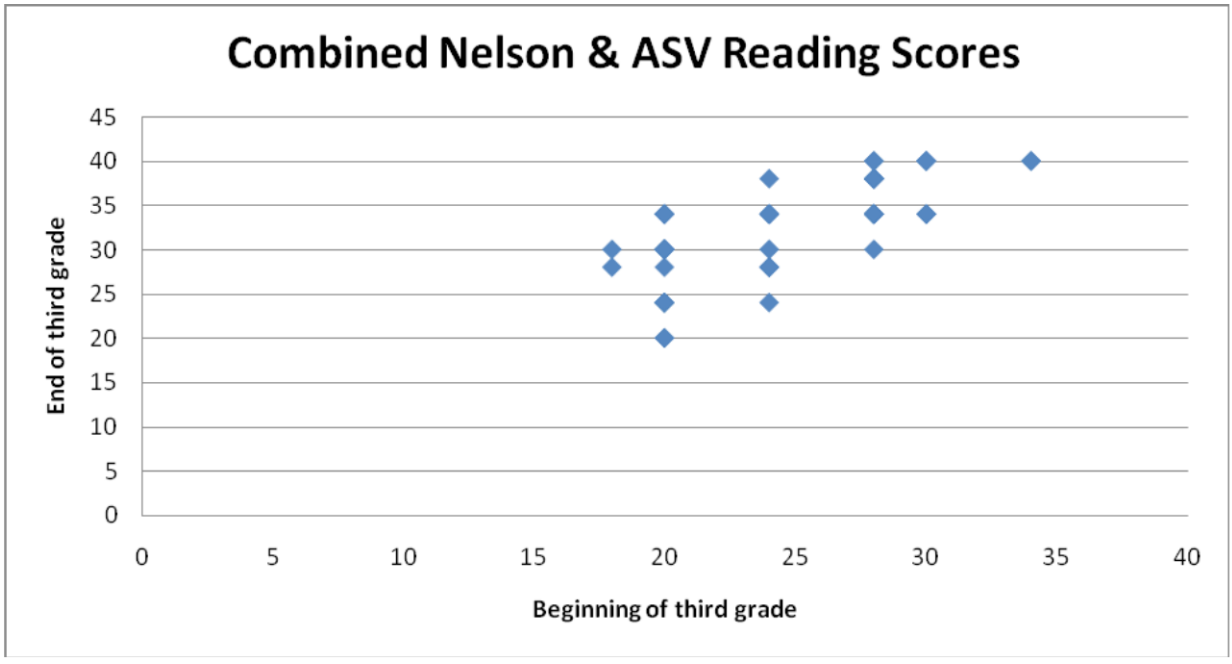
The lowest value recorded when checking the progression of the 2012-2013 ASV third graders was 0, and the highest progression value recorded was 14, giving us the minimum and maximum of this study.

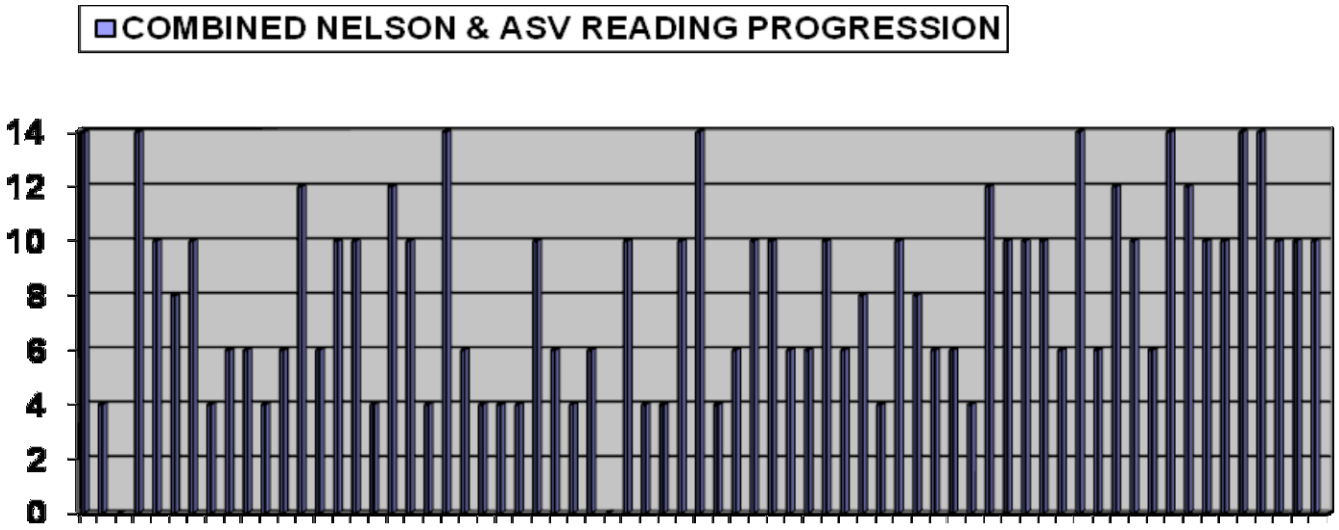
The average of the progression in this group is 7.3, which is slightly under the expected progression of 8 Fountas and Pinnell reading levels for each student, but this is mainly due to the

existence of two students who dropped the mark by recording a progression of 0 reading levels. Median in this group is 6, which is also under the aforementioned reading progression expectancy. Finally, it can be established that the range is 14, representing the distance between the lowest and highest values in the results.

12.5 Discussion

Taking the numeric references established by Fountas and Pinnell as guided reading levels, which indicate the Developmental Reading Assessment or DRA, being in this case 30 and 38 the numeric DRA benchmarks indicating entrance and exit levels at ASV, the reading progression of the students can be studied.





The lowest value recorded when checking the progression of the combined Nelson and ASV third graders was 0, and the highest progression value recorded was 14, giving us the minimum and maximum of this study.

The average of the progression in this group is 8.2, which is slightly over the expected progression of 8 Fountas and Pinnell reading levels for each student. Median in this group is 8, which just meets the aforementioned reading progression expectancy. It is worth noting the existence of two ASV students who experienced no reading progression at all, bringing the combined lowest value to 0 and affecting the whole study. Finally, it can be established that the range is 7, representing the distance between the lowest and highest values in the results.

Considering the combined data analyzed here, and taking into account that the median value of the whole group exactly meets the reading progress expectancy of 8 Fountas and Pinnell reading levels, and the average reading progression under guided reading instruction not only meets, but also exceeds the third grade reading progression expectancy by 0.2 levels, even when the group of students whose data is being reviewed includes bilingual students who are not really expected to experience the type of reading progression monolinguals are accomplishing because

of having to cope with a language other than their mother tongue, the implementation of guided reading techniques has to be considered successful.

This fact embodies the spirit of guided reading, which proves to be a very useful approach in the field of teaching languages in general, and teaching foreign languages at the earliest stages of schooling in particular, as the students are only in third grade and English is not their mother tongue.

Therefore, implementing guided reading techniques in the upcoming multilingual schooling in Spain is, at least, worth taking into consideration. Our main hypothesis is validated by the results obtained after analyzing the combined data, since the average progress of students under guided reading instruction surpasses the progress expectancy established to evaluate third graders.

13. CONCLUSION

13.1 Review of the principal aspects of the study

Final conclusions are to be exposed here, along with the implications of this study for future investigations regarding IT implemented guided reading techniques being utilized in order to teach English as a second language to young students in Spanish elementary schools, enriching this research by keeping it updated.

It has been studied through theoretic foundations and practical data gatherings how feasible it would be for the aforementioned reading techniques to be imported into Spanish schooling.

Recent studies on IT applied guided reading instruction are not numerous, being the linked bibliography lacking in volume and accessibility. Because of this deficiency, different linguistic disciplines have been consulted to achieve a global vision in the results of our investigation.

13.2 Summarize findings

Reviewing the data being analyzed in this dissertation, and having been present monitoring half of the students taking part in this research in my time working for John Nelson elementary school as bilingual third grade teacher, the benefits of teaching English as a second

language in bilingual scenarios by means of guided reading instruction are worth taking into consideration.

The engaging factor of guided reading itself, added to the attractiveness computing offers to young students, are a perfect combination that maximizes the results and makes an integral education available for a wide range of different learners with different needs that are best accommodated through updated methodologies as the one proposed here.

Current global education has students from different nations enrolling in schools that are now multicultural and international in nature. Since Spanish schools are nothing like they were in the past, teaching methodologies used when instructing foreign languages are to be reviewed and updated. Otherwise, methodologies created to fulfil necessities of other times would lose their purpose because of necessities changing and needing methodologies addressing them.

Exposure to foreign languages in general, and to English in particular, is far easier and greater nowadays than it was not so long ago. Whereas wealthy families used to be the only ones affording relatively consistent exposure, today it is almost possible for every person to have that experience.

13.3 Aim

The aim of this research was to prove the validity of guided reading as an optimum approach fitting the new demands of the upcoming multicultural schooling in Spain. Teaching foreign languages in general, and English in particular, to students at the very first steps of education, instead of delaying the implementation later in the schooling process is something that

has long been pursued in Spain, and it is finally being worked upon due to the internationalization of Spain.

By studying reading developments accomplished in different schools under guided reading implementation, the feasibility of guided reading as a valid approach to be utilized as a resource to work on the linguistic skills of young students can be tested, being the results more than successful.

13.4 Evaluation of each chapter

The first chapter enabled us to prove the delay experienced by education regarding implementing new technologies, since other aspects of life have embraced new technologies much earlier than education, and the adaptation has also been much more integrative and planned than simply place computers on desks waiting for results to improve.

The second chapter reviews previous literature written on the topics we are dealing with, although it has already been explained throughout the dissertation how there is a lack of related bibliography, partly due to the contemporariness of the use and applications of new technologies for educational purposes. Both IT and ICT concepts are etymologically analyzed, studying their evolutions, as well as the possibilities they provide educators with regarding teaching languages nowadays.

The third chapter studied the establishment of research objectives, along with a review of previous IT implemented language teaching related research. The methodology being used to

create every chapter is also unveiled, as well as some details about the characteristics of the analyzed corpus.

The fourth chapter exposed some resourceful techniques when gathering data, and also when writing a research, revealing the paradigm fitting best our research and the creation of a research statement.

The fifth chapter studies the intrinsic characteristics of the schools that were chosen for this research, including the specificities of their students and teachers, their facilities, similarities and differences to better expect the appearance of possible irregularities when analyzing the data because of it.

The sixth chapter evaluated the legal framework around bilingual education both in the United States and in Spain, analyzing its impact on the application of guided reading teaching techniques worldwide. On top of that, questions about the feasibility of importing the same bilingual educational programs that are being implemented in the US into Spain were answered here with the help of questionnaires sent both to Rockford school district in Illinois, and to the American School of Valencia.

The seventh chapter provides us with the information necessary to better understand what implementing new technologies could do for education nowadays, including data on the origins of IT, an analysis of its evolution both in terms of software and hardware from an educational standpoint, or the accessibility options IT offers to handicapped students.

The eighth chapter analyses the different methodology that has been used through time in order to teach foreign languages. By reviewing the collection of approaches worth mentioning

we can fully understand the specialization process that has been initiated, specially when we look at contemporary methods, but also how there is still the need to tailor new approaches to face the upcoming challenges to be faced by students in this technologic era.

The ninth chapter tests the validity of guided Reading as an optimal methodology regarding the instruction of foreign languages at elementary schools in general, and in bilingual scenarios in particular, being both aspects met by Spanish elementary schools, now in an ambition of going multilingual.

The tenth chapter studies bilingualism and analyses its consequences regarding education, cognition, or the socio-academic aspects. Understanding the different modalities of bilingual education provides us with an eclectic view to better design the type of bilingual program we could use to scaffold guided reading techniques and have young students achieve an improved mastery of foreign languages.

The eleventh chapter places its spotlight on the requirements of IT applied instruction including not only the creation of a new or refurbished methodology scaffolding its application, but also the necessary changes in the curriculum to accommodate a really meaningful implementation.

The twelfth chapter tests the validity of all the data being previously gathered, uncovering and contrasting statistical information in order to validate, if needed, the appropriateness of the original hypothesis proposed here.

13.5 Implications for further research

Unfortunately, there is still a long road ahead of us regarding foreign language didactics research. New needs keep appearing, and they will not stop, so even though methodologies are not capable of keeping pace with them, they should face severe updating to scaffold whatever needs are considered relevant.

Educators should focus on becoming aware of the benefits of teaching foreign languages following the most suitable methodologies for their specific students, training themselves to lead the change as figures of responsibility their students depend on.

Not only independent figures are needed when approaching an educational renewal, but also global organizations supporting and ensuring the regulation of the change, as well as its possibilities of succeeding. Research institutions have now a great opportunity of filling the gap and foreseeing what is ahead of us regarding schooling, bridging the system so that it keeps being meaningful.

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15. APPENDIX

PAUL YANKEE´S INTERVIEW

- How much of a pressure means for Nelson Elementary not to make AYP, being it in Academic Early Warning Status already?

There is a lot of pressure, but there is a provision in Early Warning Status where if a certain percentage of improvement is made on test scores a school can make "safe-Harbor" AYP status.

- What is your view on the "No Child Left Behind" law?

The law has been good in that it makes schools accountable for their improvement, and minority student and special education student scores are scrutinized and addressed for increased achievement. But the goals of 100% of all students meeting grade level AYP by the year 2014 is unrealistic.

- According to the Interactive Illinois Report card, only ten out of forty-three RPS schools are off the hook, ISAT-wise, whereas twelve schools are in AWES status and eighteen schools are in AWS status already. Why do you think that is so?

Low-income status of families of the students is the most important determiner of low academic achievement.

- According to the Interactive Illinois Report Card, 57% Nelson third graders met or exceeded ISAT test requirements by 2007 while 46% did it by 2008, getting down to 40% by 2009. Why do you think Nelson third graders are struggling enough to drop that 20% in just two years?

In 2007 Illinois had a different assessment that was more appropriate for ELLs, with modified English text, called the IMAGE. ELL students did very well on this test. In 2008 the state of Illinois was directed by the federal government to give ***all*** students the ISAT test, and ELL scores went down in every district in the state.

- What is your view on ACCESS and ISAT testing?

It is important to receive data on an annual basis to see progress in English proficiency for ACCESS, and in overall academic achievement with the ISAT. If ISAT results are truly a reflection of how well we teach the Illinois academic learning standards, then the ISAT scores are very important.

- According to the Interactive Illinois Report Card, regarding ethnicity, Nelson Hispanic students raised from 13.4% by 1999 to 56.6% by 2009, while Nelson Hispanic teachers rose from 3.9% by 1999 to 5.9% by 2009. On the other hand, Nelson Caucasian students lowered from 60.3% by 1999 to 21.4% by 2009 while Caucasian teachers lowered from 89.3% by 1999 to 87.8% by 2009. Why such a mismatch?

Nelson increased from one Bilingual classroom at each grade to two classes at each grade. There are now twice as many Bilingual classrooms as before. The general Hispanic population of Rockford has greatly increased in the last ten years. All of our schools now have a bigger Hispanic population.

JULIANE STALL´S INTERVIEW

- What do you think of "No Child Left Behind"?

I am not in favor of testing, and test results.

- What kind of students would fit in the profile of the students enrolled in your school?

Upper-class college prep students from affluent families.

- What's your opinion on the controversy in USA regarding bilingual education in some states? (proposition 227)

The United States will always struggle with second language because it is a monolingual country with bilingual inhabitants. In some schools a second language is not even required. Until learning another language is given a priority, bilingual education will continue to struggle.

- What do you see happening in the future of bilingual education both in Spain and in USA?

Spain is seeing English is important but is way behind in bilingualism. The United States has not seen the importance yet.

KRISTY BEAM´S INTERVIEW

- How did the American School of Valencia begin?

In 1974, the company Ford España, S.A. was established in Valencia, and many American and British families came over to create and develop the company. Within a short time, it became evident that schooling for the children of these families was needed and thus the Anglo-American School of Valencia in the town of Rocafort was created.

An increasing number of children from Valencia enrolled in the school, so that when the foreign families returned to their countries of origin, these Spanish families wanted to continue educating their children in a bilingual school. Los Monasterios was selected as the site, and the Spanish-English bilingual school, Colegio Hispano Norteamericano was built in 1980.

The name was changed to American School of Valencia to reflect the fact that the language of instruction, except in Spanish subjects, is English.

Beginning with only 27 students, they now have 746 students from nursery to grade 12.

- How many groups at each grade level are taught at the American School of Valencia?

We have 2 classes at each grade level except for nursery (2 year olds) where we have one class.

- How many students are currently enrolled in the American School of Valencia?

746

- How many teachers are currently employed by the American School of Valencia?

65

- How many classrooms are being utilized by the American School of Valencia?

We are at full capacity. 54 classrooms.

- How many students were in the group?

2 classes of 27 for a total of 54 students.

- What are the guided reading benchmarks of the American School of Valencia by the time students enter and exit third grade, if any?

Fountas and Pinnell: N-P DRA level: 30-38

- How much did they progress individually, in terms of graded books lettering (comparing the reading level they were at by the time they began third grade with the reading level they achieved by the end of the academic year), after being instructed using guided reading techniques?

See attached spreadsheet

- What year is the data from?

2012-2013

- Were there any specific characteristics in this group worth mentioning? (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, special education)

85% of the students are native Spanish speakers.

- Do you believe digitalizing guided reading and making it tablet-friendly would bring something new to the table in terms of early second language teaching?

Yes, it would provide students with a greater number of titles available and the technology would be enticing for the students.

- What IT applied teaching techniques and resources are used most in the ASV?

Smartboards are in each classroom and by far the most widely used resource.

- What peripheral activities are used in the ASV as learning centers, allowing teachers to focus on reduced groups during guided reading sessions, keeping the rest of the students occupied while doing so? (e.g. word walls, pocket charts, bulletin board activities)

Writing projects, word study games, rotation groups, task cards, writing about reading

- Are the students at the American School of Valencia tested in sight words recognition?

Yes, in Kindergarten and 1st grade, beyond that it becomes ¨spelling tests¨.

- Are ASV teachers being trained regarding the usage of new technologies at school?

Optional staff development opportunities are offered.

- In your opinion, would a new methodology accommodating and scaffolding IT applied language learning and teaching be resourceful, or even necessary, in the years to come?

Yes, as educators, we constantly need to evolve with new technology.

NELSON 2007-2008 BILINGUAL THIRD GRADE READING PROGRESS SPREADSHEET

DRA Sept ember	DRA June			
16	28	DRA		
20	30	K	A, 1, 2, 3	A-B
20	30	1	4, 10, 16	C-I
20	30	2	18, 20, 28	J-M

28	34	3	30, 34, 38	N-P
20	34	4	40	Q-T
28	34	5	50	S-W
18	30	6	60	Z
20	30			
28	34			
20	34			
28	40			
28	38			
28	38			
20	34			
20	34			
28	38			
20	30			
28	38			

ASV 2012-2013 BILINGUAL THIRD GRADE READING PROGRESS SPREADSHEET

DRA Sept ember	DRA June
20	34
20	24
20	20
20	24
28	38
20	28
28	38
24	28
34	40
24	28
34	40
28	40
28	34
28	38
24	34

DRA		
K	A, 1, 2, 3	A-B
1	4, 10, 16	C-I
2	18, 20, 28	J-M
3	30, 34, 38	N-P
4	40	Q-T
5	50	S-W
6	60	Z

20	24
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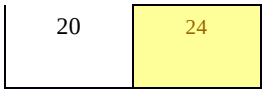
20
24